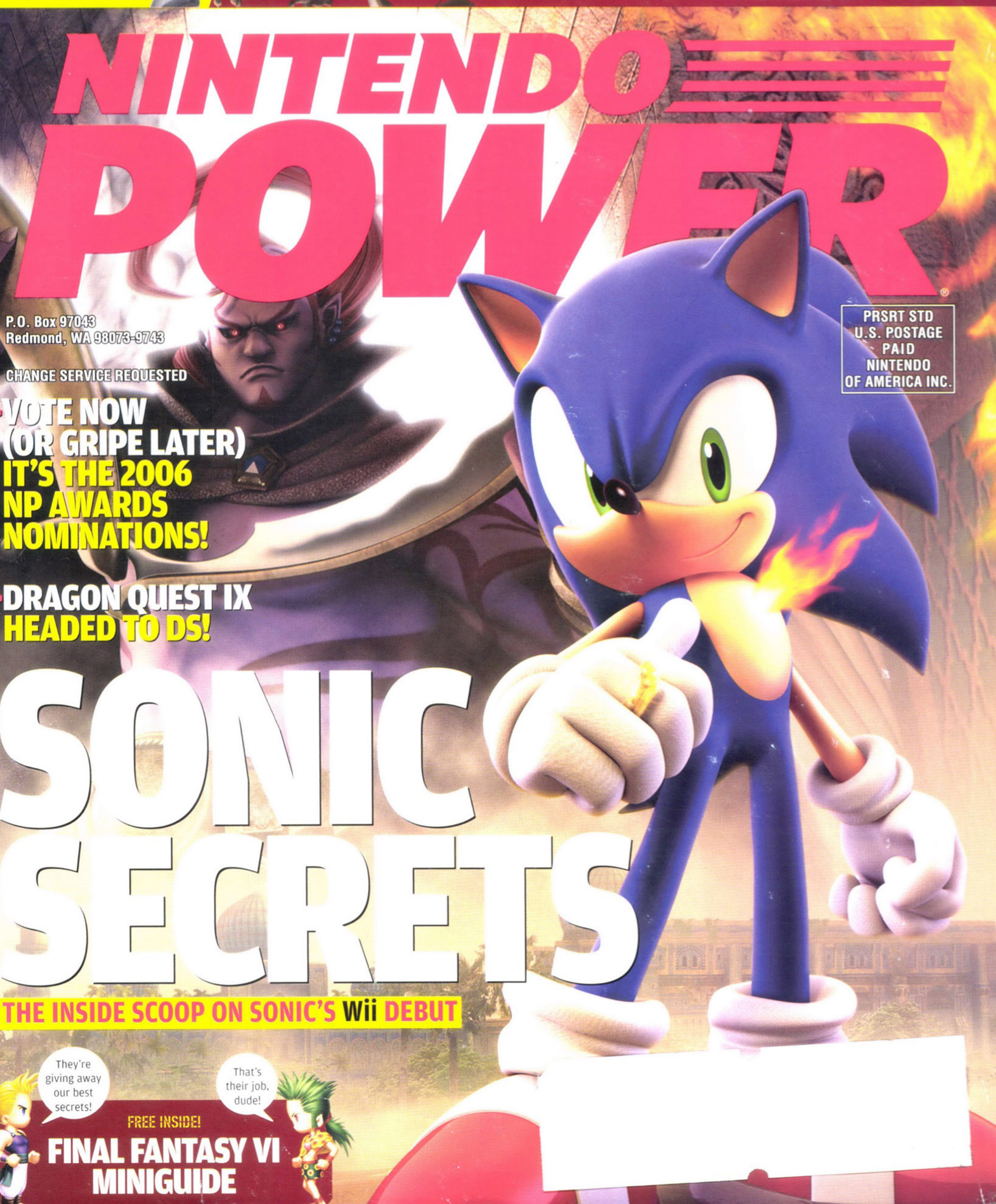
ON THE Wii™

>THE LOONEY TUNES

>SUPER PAPER MARIO

>SSX BLUR

NINTENDO POWER®



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VOTE NOW (OR GRIPE LATER) IT'S THE 2006 NP AWARDS NOMINATIONS!

DRAGON QUEST IX HEADED TO DS!

SONIC SECRETS

THE INSIDE SCOOP ON SONIC'S Wii DEBUT

They're giving away our best secrets!
That's their job, dude!

FREE INSIDE!

FINAL FANTASY VI MINIGUIDE

FREEDOM WINGS™
Two Fantastic
High-Soaring Thrills!
Take to the skies as you battle against ruthless air pirates in this action RPG!

LEVEL :14
EXP :36811
MONEY :4101635 GLD

My vessel is a carrier. But with no planes on board, I can't fight off the pirates.

GUN
0688
MSL
0017
MANUAL
DAMAGE
FUEL
AI-MODE
LOCK
LOCK MODE AUTO
VIEW
ALT.
SPEED

Mayday! Mayday!
Is anyone there?

GUN
2200
MSL
0020
MANUAL
DAMAGE
FUEL
AI-MODE
LOCK
LOCK MODE SELF
VIEW
ALT.
SPEED

MANUAL
DAMAGE
FUEL
RDR
AUTO
GUN
MSL

EVERYONE 10+
Mild Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

NINTENDO DS™

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DS Titles!

HARVEST MOON® DS

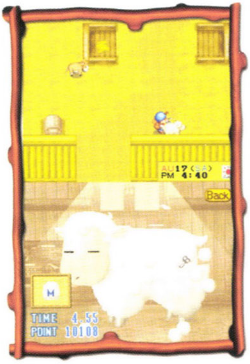
An Enchanted Farming Adventure!

- Plan, design and build a custom farm!
- Marry a maiden, mermaid, witch or goddess!
- Insert Harvest Moon: Friends of Mineral Town or Harvest Moon: More Friends of Mineral Town into your Nintendo DS and get bonus surprises!
- Play Harvest Sprite Casino Games!
- Innovative Touch Screen features!

Stamina 86/100
Fatigue 0/100
18 (WE)
AM 9:30

Please come if you'd like.
I'm Popuri, and I'm
on the executive committee.

Popuri



Oops! What have I done?
I used the wrong spell.

Witch Princ

NATSUME®
Serious Fun®
www.natsume.com

EVERYONE
E
Simulated Gambling
Use of Alcohol
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

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NINTENDO POWER

CONTENTS MARCH 2007

FEATURES

30 New Blue
Sonic's debut on Wii combines 3-D beauty with 2-D flavor, and puts a new twist on some old fables.

42 Better Gaming through Science
Via modern behavioral analysis and rigorous experimentation, we have devised the perfect method for turning your friend into a gamer for life. Really. Kinda.

48 Grease Monkey
Wanna be king of the Diddy Kong Racing jungle? We navigate every curve of the classic racer remake for DS.

52 Chairman of the Board
Mario, the creator and undisputed leader of the party-game genre, returns to the table with Mario Party 8 on Wii.

58 Lootin' and Tootin'
Our odor-free preview of Wario: Master of Disguise shows that intestinal distress is actually a very good thing.

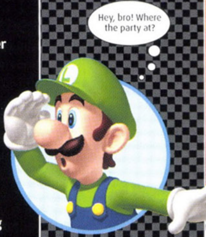
62 Motion Blur
EA is bringing the icy-fresh snowboarding franchise SSX exclusively to Wii. Get your uber on with our hands-on look.

66 Sixth Sense
Everything you wanted to know to bring down the Gestahlian Empire and defeat Kefka but were afraid to ask.

74 2006 Nintendo Power Awards Nominations
It's that time again! Time to fill out your ballots for the best titles of the past year.

And one ring to run really fast . . .

30
Kiss the ring.


Hey, bro! Where the party at?

58
A moon with an eye patch?!? Now we've seen everything!

Our Game of the Year vote is for Elite Raving Princesses. There's no way we can lose. Pg. 74

This is either an awesome Wii moment or something has gone horribly wrong. Pg. 62

ANY MORE REALISTIC AND YOU'D BE GROUNDED FOR MAKING SUCH A MESS.
UNLOCK
UNLOCK
2:10
640
545
727
Elebits™
EVERYONE
E
Cartoon Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING
www.esrb.org
Exclusively for
Wii™
KONAMI

When you hunt for Elebits you're bound to make a mess. The Wii Remote lets you throw stuff around like crazy while looking for them. So pick it up and go Elebits hunting. And don't worry. You won't get in trouble for trashing the place.

www.konami.com

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NINTENDO POWER

CONTENTS

1 HIT
25 / 35
62%
⊖ :メニュー

Square Enix has a Wii cure for the New Year's blues.

24

MARIO GOES ABOVE THE FOLD; TMNT DELIVERS THE PIZZA; RAYMAN RAVES ON DS; CAKE MANIA COMES OUT OF THE OVEN; POKéMON GOES HIGH-CLASS; SNK AND CAPCOM SHUFFLE THE DECK

PREVIEW
MARCH 07

DEPARTMENTS

10 Pulse
We fend off wild primates, start thinking about 2008, and begrudgingly revisit the agony that is Corrector's Corner.

16 News
Whether you like to smash bugs or play as Bugs, the Wii has something for you in 2007. Oh, and something about DQ IX.

22 Smash Files
First Link gets a stellar launch title, then he gets a full-page profile for his spot in Brawl. How much more press can this guy garner?

24 Previews

38 Wii Channels
Be the first on your block to know when it's raining in Rio. Or just play Donkey Kong Country. The choice is yours.

73 Quiz

84 Playback

85 Reviews
The holiday rush has passed, but there are still some great games coming out to fill those dark winter months.

92 Community

96 Next Month

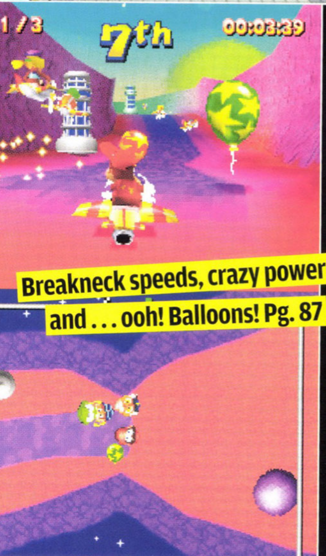
97 Contacts

16
Must . . . resist . . . three-year-old . . . Alan joke. . . .

24
You'll never guess what's coming to Wii.

HP 10/10
SCORE 0001000
COIN

Here's what's happening in your neck of the woods!
Nuuk
Redmond
Los Angeles
San Juan
Lima


LAP 1 / 3
7th
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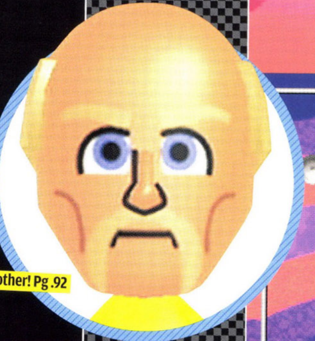
Breakneck speeds, crazy power-ups, and . . . ooh! Balloons! Pg. 87

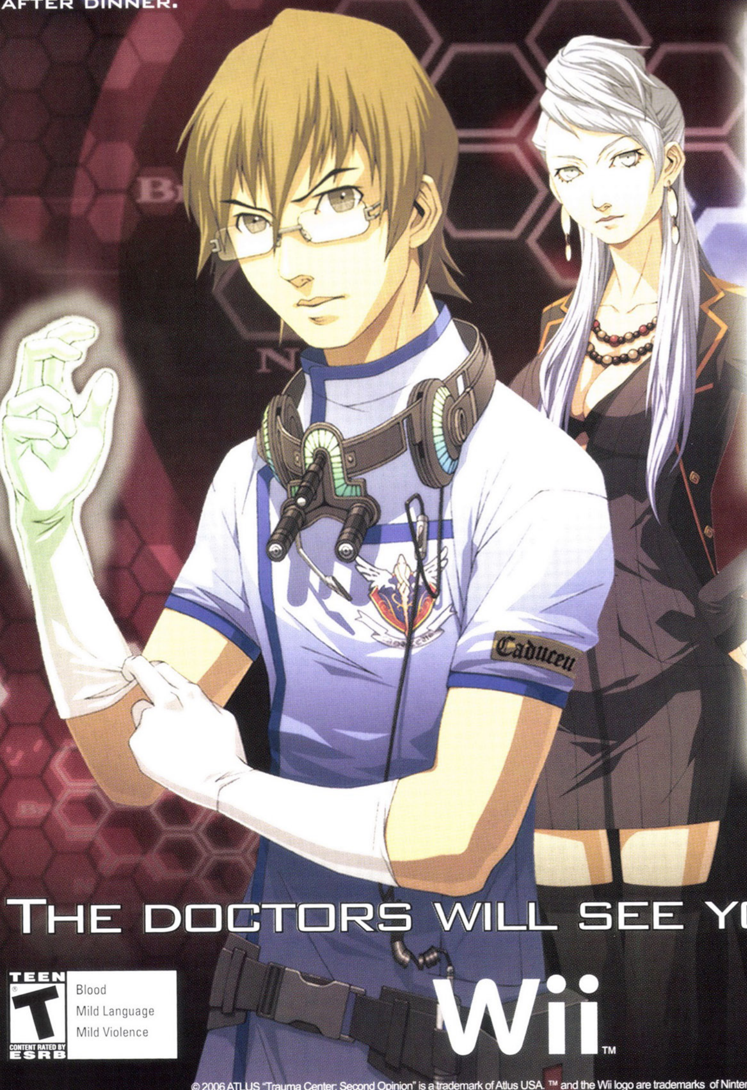


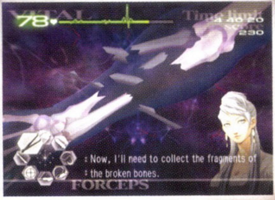
Mii mania is running wild, brother! Pg .92

TRAUMA CENTER™

SECOND OPINION

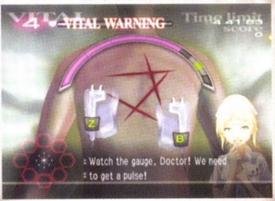
IT TAKES YEARS OF MEDICAL SCHOOL, RESIDENCY, AND CLINIC DUTY TO BECOME A SURGEON AND SAVE LIVES. OR, YOU COULD SKIP ALL THAT AND PUT IN A FEW HOURS AFTER DINNER.




VITAL
78
Time limit
4 40 20
SCORE
230
FORCEPS

: Now, I'll need to collect the fragments of
: the broken bones.

ENHANCED PLAY WITH DIFFICULTY MODES...


VITAL
4
VITAL WARNING
Time limit
4 41 63
SCORE
0
Z
B

: Watch the gauge, Doctor! We need
: to get a pulse!

NEW SURGICAL IMPLEMENTS LIKE THE DEFIBRILLATOR...

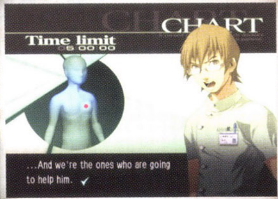


CHART
Time limit
05 00 00

...And we're the ones who are going
to help him.

AND AN EXCITING NEVER-BEFORE-SEEN CONCLUSION!

THE DOCTORS WILL SEE YOU NOW...

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Mild Language
Mild Violence

Wii™

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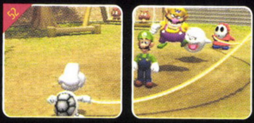
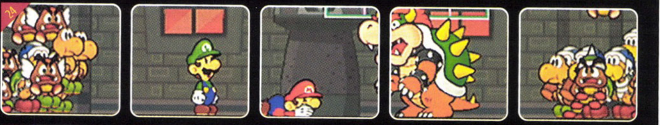
GAME INDEX

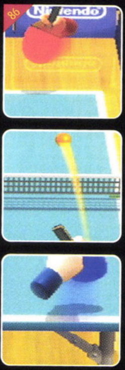
GAME TITLE	PAGE
Alien Crush (VC)	38
Arthur and the Invisibles (DS, GBA)	89
Bonanza Bros. (VC)	38
Cake Mania (DS)	26
Cartoon Network Racing (DS)	89
Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin (DS)	94
Comix Zone (VC)	38
Diddy Kong Racing DS (DS)	48,87
Donkey Kong Country (VC)	38
Dragon Quest IX (DS)	16
Dragon Quest Swords: The Masked Queen and the Tower of Mirrors (Wii)	16
Escape from Bug Island (Wii)	17
Final Fantasy VI Advance (GBA)	66,87
Final Fantasy XII: Revenant Wings (DS)	18
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates	18
Fire Emblem* (Wii)	18
Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends (GBA)	89
Gain Ground (VC)	38
Ghost Rider (GBA)	89
Gradius (VC)	38
Hotel Dusk: Room 215 (DS)	88
Inuyasha: Secret of the Divine Jewel (DS)	88
Izuna: Legend of the Unemployed Ninja (DS)	88
The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (VC)	39
The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages (GBC)	84
The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons (GBC)	84
Looney Tunes* (Wii)	19
Lunar Knights (DS)	89
Mario Party 8 (Wii)	52
Marvel Trading Card Game (DS)	87
Mazes of Fate (GBA)	89
Medal of Honor: Vanguard (Wii)	17
Military Madness (VC)	38
Motoroader (VC)	39
Pokémon Diamond (DS)	27
Pokémon Pearl (DS)	27
Rafa Nadal Tennis (DS)	89
Rayman Raving Rabbids (DS)	26
R-Type III: The Third Lightning (VC)	39
Shrek Smash n'Crash Racing (GCN, GBA)	89
SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS (DS)	28
Soldier Blade (VC)	39
Sonic and the Secret Rings (Wii)	30
SSX Blur (Wii)	62
Street Fighter II: The World Warrior (VC)	39
Streets of Rage (VC)	40
Super Castlevania IV (VC)	39
Super Mario Bros. (VC)	39
Super Mario World (VC)	39
Super Paper Mario (Wii)	24
Super Smash Bros. Brawl (Wii)	22
TMNT (Wii, GCN, DS, GBA)	25
Totally Spies! 2: Undercover (DS, GBA)	89
Trioncube (DS)	89
Wario: Master of Disguise (DS)	58
Wii Play (Wii)	86
Winning Eleven Pro Evolution Soccer 2007 (DS)	86
Yu-Gi-Oh! Spirit Caller (DS)	89

* Tentative Title

DS = Nintendo DS
GBA = Game Boy Advance
GBC = Game Boy Color
GCN = Nintendo GameCube
VC = Wii Virtual Console
Wii = Wii





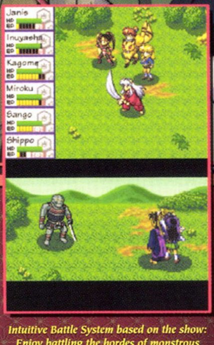


EXPERIENCE THIS ORIGINAL STORY FROM THE INUYASHA™ UNIVERSE!

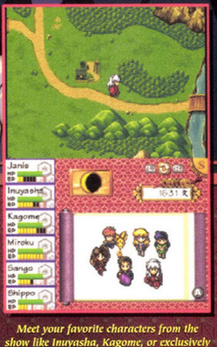
INUYASHA™

SECRET OF THE DIVINE JEWEL™

Immerse yourself in the world of Rumiko Takahashi's popular animated TV series "Inuyasha," full of exciting adventure as you discover the brand new plot and story line that has never been told before. Travel with your favorite characters on the show and battle through the hordes of mystical demons to uncover the Secret of the Divine Jewel.


Janis
Inuyasha
Kagome
Miroku
Sango
Shippo

Intuitive Battle System based on the show: Enjoy battling the hordes of monstrous demons with an intuitive command-based control scheme.


Janis
Inuyasha
Kagome
Miroku
Sango
Shippo
16:31

Meet your favorite characters from the show like Inuyasha, Kagome, or exclusively created characters such as Janis and form a band to travel and battle!

EVERYONE 10+
E
10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood
Mild Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
Mild Suggestive Themes

NINTENDO DS™

viz media™

BANDAI NAMCO Games™

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Pulse

ALL ABOARD

Nintendo's reputation for publishing quality console games has never been in question, but third-party game publishers haven't always been ready to jump onboard. What were they waiting for? Apparently Wii. The console offers publishers and developers a cost-effective platform, easy-to-use development tools, and the freedom to design games that explore new control styles and gaming experiences. In this issue you'll get an early taste of what's headed your way. Our cover story takes you to Japan, where Steve Thomason was invited into the hedgehog's private dojo to bring you the inside story on Sonic and the Secret Rings. What emerged is an extraordinary action game that recaptures the breathless speed and fun of the early Sonic titles. From there we head to the slopes with EA's SSX Blur—the first of a flood of EA games coming to Wii this year. Our March news features announcements of a Looney Tunes title, Medal of Honor: Vanguard, and more Wii newcomers. As for DS third-party news, don't miss this month's stunning announcements from Japan that firmly place DS at the forefront of Square Enix's development plans.

And since this is the March issue, it's time to cast your votes for NP's annual Power Awards. While you're waiting for us to tally the results, turn your attention to FINAL FANTASY VI for GBA—our miniguide will help you survive one of the toughest RPGs ever made. Or you could brush up on Diddy Kong Racing with our primer. Finally, we've included a guide to making a gamer out of a non-gamer, plus a gallery of celebrity Miis. Have fun!

Scott Pelland
Managing Editor

LETTERS

Wii BIT O' LOVE

Yes, we have a Wii because we love Nintendo and video games, but my dear husband has gone overboard—he got our three-year-old her own Wii controller! And she LOVES it. Great job to Nintendo—our family LOVES the Wii!

Jim S.
via the Internet

Kudos to Nintendo for developing a game system simple enough for everyone. After a few minutes of instruction on the Wii from his grandsons, my 87-year-old father KO'd a boxer in the second round of Wii Sports Boxing. He also threw strikes in the first two frames when bowling, and shot a respectable two over par in golf.

Nancy L.
via the Internet

WHEN APES ATTACK

Do you all ever have the fear that monkeys, enraged by games such as Super Monkey Ball and Ape Escape, are plotting to take over the world, enslave humankind, entrap us all in giant balls, and force us to roll down intricate obstacle courses? I for one have Charlton Heston on speed dial just in case. . . .

Cody P.
via the Internet

Every day of our lives, Cody. Our frequent petitions to the U.N. to address these grave concerns have so far fallen on deaf ears. Can you pass that number onto us?

NAME THAT TUNE

The other day my friend came up with the idea for a Wii theme song. It would be the song "We Will Rock You," except it would be "Wii Will Rock You." Please tell Nintendo about this idea because I think it would be a cool way to advertise the Wii.

Nintendoman2000
via the Internet

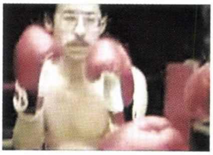
"Wii Will Rock You," huh? That's kind of low-hanging fruit. How about "Wii Are the World" or "Wii Built This City?" How about a rekindling of the Go-Go's classic "Wii Got the Beat?" If all else fails, how about starting a cover band called Wii Are Scientists? Speaking of which. . . .

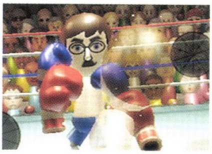
WE WISH WE WERE THIS CLEVER

In Volume 211 at the top of the Wii Sports review titled "It's a Hit," I realized that the screenshot above it was a replica of the We Are Scientists music video "It's A Hit" about a rookie boxer who works his way up to the top and gets knocked dead (literally) by a boxer named O'Grady. The blue Mii with the glasses and the mustache is the bass player in the band and the transparent red Mii is the guitar/vocal/leader of the band (the drummer isn't shown in the picture). You guys are pretty sneaky but not sneaky enough on that one.

Mister Something
via the Internet

That's freaky! We swear it was completely coincidental, but the similarity is uncanny.





GOT TO KEEP ON WALKIN'

I just received Volume 211 and had to respond to Canyx about their Pikachu GS. I am actually on my second one; I lost my first one in Lake Tahoe (I was heartbroken!!!). I wear my second one every day, play the card game to generate more watts, and use it as a pedometer. I sleep through the alarm clock, but

I have had fun programming my own tunes. So far, I have made the theme from Voltron, Zelda, and even Japas' practice melody from Majora's Mask. I have had mine for 1,402 days and walked 7,939,630 steps. Shall we split the Guinness record?

Ashli
via the Internet

That's some serious stepping, Ashli, but it doesn't quite make the grade. You do get extra credit for composing the Voltron theme, however.

I was looking through Pulse of Volume 211, and I've got to respond to Canyx, the writer with the Pikachu GS. He said his GS was at day 917, with 8,091,819 steps, and claimed that was the record? Try 1,232 days (about 3 years, 4 months), with 11,027,695 steps! (By the way, since it has space to show only seven digits for the number of steps, I found out it resets the count once you get past 9,999,999 steps.) My goal is 10,000 steps a day, but when I sit at the computer a lot, well. . . . There are also a number of activities I do for exercise that the GS doesn't pick up a count for (bicycling, for example). And yes, those batteries last a long time, though the color setting seems to be going bad (I keep having to turn it up one use, then down the next, just so that the lines are dark enough to see).

Sakabato
via the Internet

Sorry Canyx—you've been given your walking papers. Sakabato has you beat by a mile. Check that—he has you by about 1,462 miles. Good luck catching up.

TOUCHING IS GOOD

Remember the Game Boy Player for GameCube? What if you made a Nintendo DS Player for the Wii? By moving the nunchuk you could replicate stylus movement and by thrusting the nunchuk you could tap. By holding the top nunchuk button and moving the nunchuk you will be able to drag something. Please think about it!

Colin M.
via the Internet

We actually have a little experience playing the DS on a TV screen, and to be honest, it's not that fun. It doesn't work mostly because the dual screen doesn't fit too well onto the TV. Also, there's no microphone on the Wii remote. As for using the nunchuk to simulate tapping the touch screen—well, nothing can replace the pinpoint accuracy of the stylus.

PARTY LIKE IT'S 1988

I just renewed my subscription for 2007, which will be my 19th year of receiving the magazine. That means it appears Nintendo Power is going to turn 20 in 2008 and I plan to be there when it does.

I'm wondering whether there are any plans for a celebration of 20 years? Will you involve the longtime subscribers? You could have a top 10 greatest Nintendo games list from your 20-year subscribers. Or if it is too long, have a list of the top 100 games voted on by the longtime readers.

Jim S.
via the Internet

You're right—we'll be hootin' and hollerin' about our 20th anniversary in 2008. Thanks for making us feel old! We don't have any concrete plans, but expect big things this time next year.

NEXT TIME TRY WiiKIPEDIA?

I've noticed that whenever you mention the Fire Emblem game coming out next year for the Wii, you just put Fire Emblem. In case you don't yet know, the title is The Goddess of Dawn. You can look it up on Wikipedia if you want.

Phil V.
via the Internet

First things first—just because Wikipedia says it doesn't make it true. Now that we have that out of the way, The Goddess of Dawn is the Japanese subtitle and, according to NOA's localization department, is likely to be different for the game's North American release.

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

Now that the Wii is out and all the old classics are available to play through the Virtual Console, I'm able to catch up on some of the classics I missed (I wasn't born yet). Although I've played video games since before the GameCube era, the Wii's backward compatibility has given me the urge to play through some of the GameCube favorites again. What do you gaming pros at NP consider the best of the best for the GameCube? I promise to buy Beyond Good and Evil if you print a complete list!

Brad
via the Internet

We don't have space for a complete list, but be sure that Beyond Good and Evil would be toward the top. For advice on the top GameCube games of all time, check out our list of top 200 games of all time that we concluded in Volume 200.

can't you just walk yourself
you disappoint me
abovetheinfluence.com

Office of National Drug Control Policy/Partnership for a Drug-Free America®

I need your sage advise on an issue that has plagued mankind for decades. How do I manage the fall rush of games? In the span of one month I have bought FFIII, Wii with Twilight Princess, and Trauma Center: Second Opinion. And there is a plethora of other games that have recently come out or will come out. Normally, this overload of games would be a great way to spend my days, but I'm currently in my junior year of high school and need to spend many hours a night doing homework and studying. This leaves just weekends and vacations, which are filled with homework and work to support my gaming habit. How am I supposed to continue to do well in school while beating the games I own before I graduate college?

Nolan S.
via the Internet

Welcome to the terrible world of responsibility, Nolan. Get used to it, 'cause it only gets harder from here. Steve T. had the same problem—just replace "homework" with "writing articles"—and came up with one possible solution. He made a list of the games he wanted to beat, then made a bet with Chris S. that he could beat them all in 2006. Chris won, but the wager drove Steve to complete more games than he might have otherwise. It's just a thought.

ORDER OF THE ZELDA

I can't take it anymore! I *have* to know the real timeline of all the Zelda games. It's driving me nuts! I've come up with so many theories but a lot of those are just assumptions. I've given up on trying to come up with something that's plausible. I finally had it but then Twilight Princess messed it up so I had to start assuming! I want facts. If the upcoming Zelda games will reveal it all then please, just say that.

Marshall C.
via the Internet

Zelda masters Miyamoto and Aonuma have been coy about the series timeline, and you can expect them to stay that way in the future. We agree that some order would be nice, but we doubt that there will ever be a Zelda game that illustrates a coherent timeline.

YOU PROBABLY HAVE ALL OF YOUR TEETH, TOO

I was at a hockey tournament and my team was staying at a hotel. We all brought our game systems for everyone to play—I brought my Wii and my entire team was lined up in my room to get a chance to play Wii Sports. Everyone had fun and wanted to get a Wii. My point is you don't need a violent game to please everyone; all you need is to have a fun game and a cool controller. Good job, Nintendo!

Tim V.
via the Internet

We agree. Wii Sports is a great way to . . . wait—you're a hockey player worried about violence in games? With that attitude you're going to be riding some serious pine during your next tournament.

THAT'S A TOUGHIE

I'm in a quagmire. For Christmas I am asking for cash from my family. I figured that I could probably get enough money to get a Wii and a game. I also figured out that I'll start driving around the same time. I was very happy when I came to this conclusion until my parents informed me that I had to pay for my own driving lessons, which would cost nearly all of my holiday cash. Here's what I see: Driving = Girls, Wii = Fun. Which should I choose? I need help!

Richard J.
via the Internet

We're typically big proponents of going the video game direction, but you raise an interesting question. Our practical advice is to find a girl who knows what an Elebit is.

THE KOALAS DON'T LIE

I just finished reading Subzero925's letter in Volume 212, and I'd just like to say that the contests in Nintendo Power are indeed real. How do I know? I won the grand prize in the volume with Killer 7 on the front [Volume 190]. That prize was a trip to Australia and a copy of Donkey Kong Jungle Beat. Don't believe me? Here's a picture of me and my family in Sydney!

Disease
via the Internet

WHAT'S IN A NUMBER?

You gave Twilight Princess a 9.5. How dare you. What makes it any worse than Resident Evil 4? And how could you shove Zelda to the side, placing it among such travesties as Rocket Slime and Elite Beat Agents? I am shocked, I tell you. Shocked.

Joleen E.
via the Internet

Travesties? TRAVESTIES? You bite your tongue. Rocket Slime and Elite Beat Agents were both awesome. Putting Twilight Princess in their crowd is an honor unto itself. And please, don't rip TP's (really high) score without reading Chris H.'s thorough review in Volume 211, as well.

Video game music has a large impact on how much I enjoy a game, and Nintendo games always have memorable musical masterpieces. Despite Mr. Hoffman's negative view of Twilight Princess's music, I think the game has some of the best video game music out there. And by the way, Chris, that game deserved a 10; the gameplay flowed perfectly; the 25% of Wii owners who still don't have TP must go out and buy it! I'm just wondering how to get my hands on the soundtrack. Koji Kondo did an amazing job.

Flame_932
via the Internet

That's more like it. If you disagree with the score, you gotta tell us why. And yes, it's still a great game that belongs in every Wii owner's library. As for the TP music, the easiest way to get Zelda tunes is to choose the Twilight Princess seven-track CD as a bonus when you subscribe to Nintendo Power (we love shameless plugs).

THE HEAT IS OFF

I hope you can answer this question and stop all the rumors going around. Does leaving a Nintendo Wii game in the console after turning it off cause harm to the system? I hear countless times on the Internet that it is not good to leave a game in the console when not in use.

NINTENDO POWER

Wii ARE NINTENDO POWER

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Doing so will supposedly cause the game to get hot and eventually cause disk-read errors. I still stand by the fact that leaving a game in the console does absolutely nothing to the game since I have done this for years for other systems with no problems.

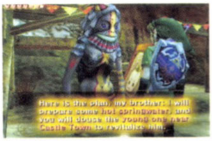
John B.
via the Internet

You're absolutely right, John. Even with the Wii, which never completely powers down, it's safe to leave discs in the system when you're not playing.

WE'RE IN HOT WATER

I noticed how in Volume 211 you mentioned the Magic Armor in The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess. You said you need to give the Goron 1,000 Rupees to fix the bridge and then give him 2,000 for them to buy out the shop in Castle Town. There is a cheaper way of doing this. Instead of paying him 2,000 you can pay him 200. First, talk to the old Goron outside of the shop. He will tell you of another Goron that is on the newly fixed bridge. Talk to this Goron and he will tell you to shower him with hot spring water. Go back to the old Goron to receive a barrel of the spring water. You will now need to run across Hyrule Field and throw it on the Goron. Then you can go back to the Malo Mart in Kakariko Village and now you only need to give the Goron 200 Rupees! (The Magic Armor price is still the same, however.) This is a massive money-saver and is a great alternative.

John K.
via the Internet



Here is the plan, my brother: I will prepare some hot springwater, and you will douse the young one near Castle Town to revitalize him.

IGNORE A PROBLEM AND IT WILL GO AWAY

I just want to say how much I hate corrector's corner! What kind of picky gaming nerds care if you guys said something slightly inaccurate?!? And you guys just take it! Why? You guys are way cooler than anyone who writes to corrector's corner. So please, please, please don't put a corrector's corner in the magazine this time. If you do honor my request, I promise I'll try Killer 7 (even though it looks stupid).

Nick L.
via the Internet

Sorry, Nick, but we're suckers for accountability. It makes us better researchers and fact checkers in the long run. Oh, and you should still play Killer 7.
Having said that. . . .

CORRECTOR'S CORNER

In Volume 211's Inuyasha: Secret of the Divine Jewel preview, you said that he turns into a human on the full moon, when he really loses his demon powers on the night of the new moon.

Texterminator
via the Internet

I found that you guys incorrectly identified an F-35 as an F-22 in your news article on Heatseeker in Volume 211. The F-22 has two engines, while the plane in the picture has one. The placement of the tail fins is also consistent with the F-35, whereas the F-22's tail fins are placed much closer to the engines.

General Aurum
via the Internet

Sir, Sorry, Sir. In addition to the differences in the appearance of the planes, we probably could've just read the screen shot where it says "F-35 JSF SVTOL."

I noticed that on the cover of Volume 211 it says "WIN A EXCLUSIVE POSTER" when it should have been, "WIN *AN* EXCLUSIVE POSTER." I'm just a grammar freak like that.

Parker K.
via the Internet

Just wanted to point out a mistake in Volume 212. On page 43 you list that the magic armor is 698 rupees when its actually 598.

Troy L.
via the Internet

One more note—we made an error in Volume 211's Art of the Month section of Community. We accidentally switched the names of the artists—the hand-drawn submission was created by Yoshiunity, and the computer-drawn image was done by Thumper_001. Our apologies!

PLEASE WRITE US:

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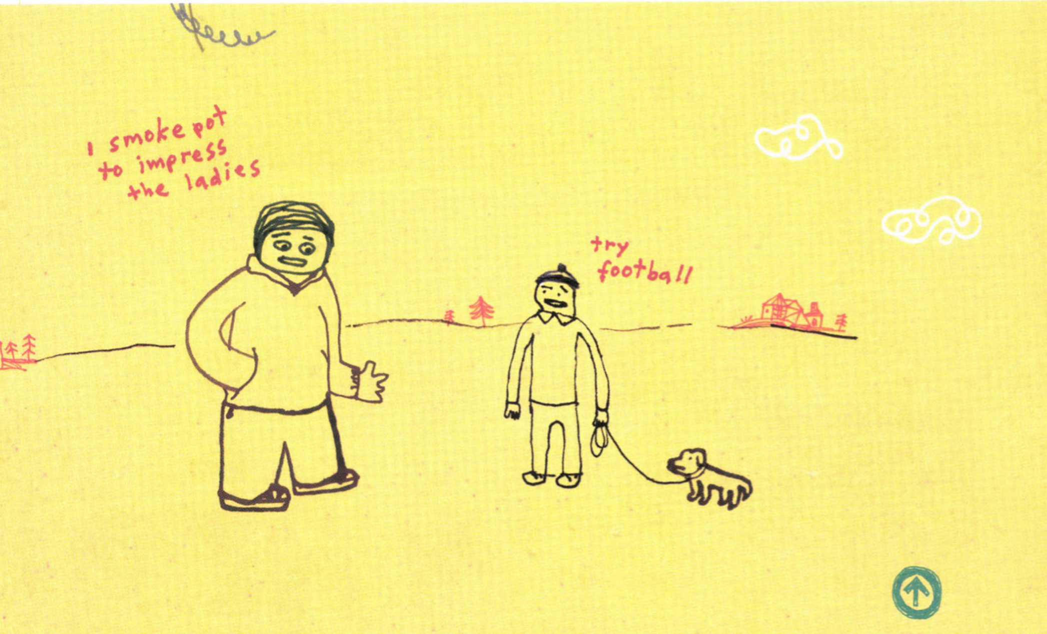
I smoke pot to impress the ladies
try football

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MOST WANTED

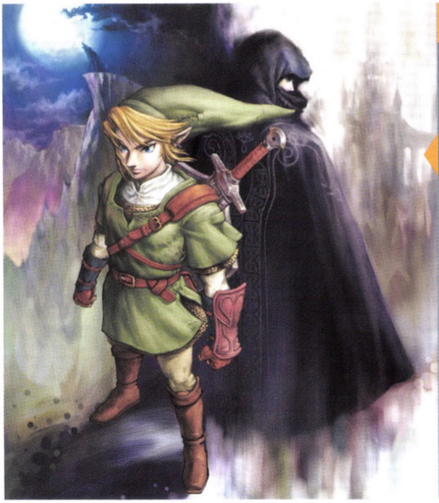
As voted by the readers. Go to nintendo.com/mostwanted and let your voice be heard!

>Wii

1 Super Smash Bros. Brawl
2 Metroid Prime 3: Corruption
3 Super Mario Galaxy
4 FINAL FANTASY Crystal Chronicles: Crystal Bearers
5 Fire Emblem

>NINTENDO DS

1 The Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass
2 Pokémon Diamond and Pokémon Pearl
3 FINAL FANTASY Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates
4 Wario: Master of Disguise
5 Mega Man Star Force



TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO Wii

The first sales figures have come in for Wii, and you won't believe what topped the charts! OK, you will.

1 The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess
2 Red Steel
3 Super Monkey Ball: Banana Blitz
4 Rayman Raving Rabbids
5 Call of Duty 3
6 Madden NFL 07
7 Trauma Center: Second Opinion
8 Marvel: Ultimate Alliance
9 Excite Truck
10 Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2

TOP SELLERS

>GAME BOY ADVANCE

This month we bid fond farewell to the Game Boy Advance sales charts. Alas, we may never get to see FINAL FANTASY VI in all its #1 glory.

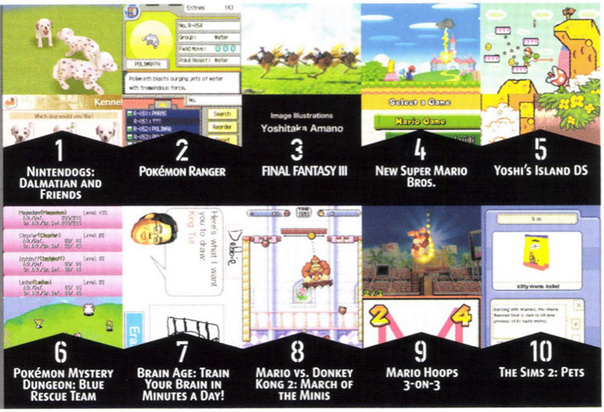
We'll miss ya, Lindsay.

1 Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest
2 Pokémon FireRed
3 Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Red Rescue Team
4 Namco Museum
5 Pokémon LeafGreen
6 Cars
7 Frogger's Adventure: Temple of the Frog
8 Herbie: Fully Loaded
9 Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2
10 Quad Desert Fury

TOP SELLERS

>NINTENDO DS

Who woulda thunk? People still love cute puppies.



1 Nintendogs: Dalmatian and Friends
2 Pokémon Ranger
3 FINAL FANTASY III
4 New Super Mario Bros.
5 Yoshi's Island DS
6 Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Blue Rescue Team
7 Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day!
8 Mario vs. Donkey Kong 2: March of the Minis
9 Mario Hoops 3-on-3
10 The Sims 2: Pets

Sales data courtesy of the NPDFunworld TRSTS Video Game Source.

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Yu-Gi-Oh! GX
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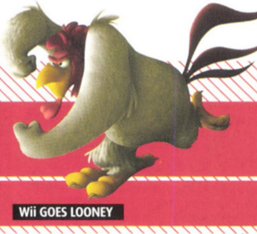
A NEW DAWN

DS FANTASIES



Wii GOES LOONEY

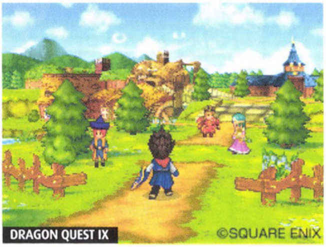
MEGATON!

Here Be Dragons

Square Enix shocks the world, announcing Dragon Quest IX exclusively for DS. Plus, feast your eyes on the first screens from Dragon Quest Swords for Wii!

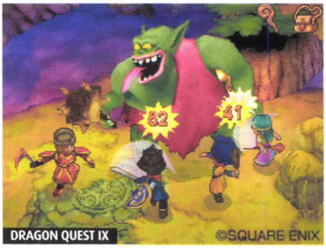
In one of the biggest bombshells in recent memory, Square Enix has revealed that the next installment of the venerable Dragon Quest franchise, Dragon Quest IX: Hoshizora no Mamoribito (roughly translated to Protectors of the Starry Sky), is headed exclusively to DS. The series' core creative staff of Yuji Horii (scenario writer and game designer), Koichi Sugiyama (composer), and Akira Toriyama (character designer) will once again partner with Level-5 (the same studio that worked on Dragon Quest VIII) on the game's development. Further details remain scant, though Horii promises a new form of "network experience" via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. The game is slated for a 2007 release in Japan, and given the success of the DS and the unparalleled popularity of Dragon Quest there, we expect the game to sell approximately 57 billion copies. No US date has been revealed.

In other DQ news, check out the first screenshots from the Wii-exclusive Dragon Quest Swords: The Masked Queen and the Tower of Mirrors. Looking good! —Steve T.



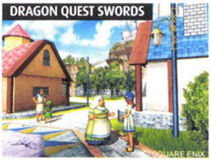
DRAGON QUEST IX

And we thought Final Fantasy III was pretty. Square Enix continues to push the limits of the DS's graphic capabilities.

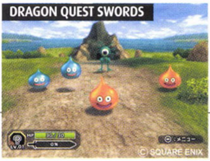


DRAGON QUEST IX

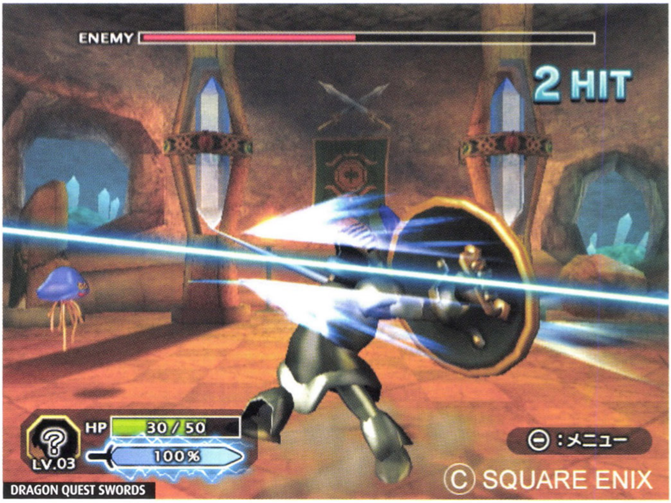
Want to see more? You can check out a trailer for DQ IX at www.square-enix.co.jp/dragonquest/20th/DQ9PVL.html.



DRAGON QUEST SWORDS



DRAGON QUEST SWORDS



DRAGON QUEST SWORDS

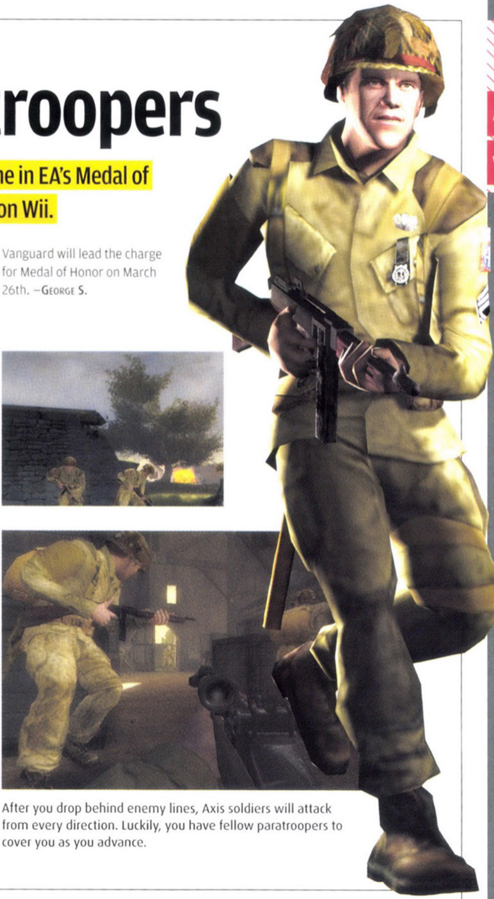
POINT AND SHOOT

EA Honors Paratroopers

You are paratrooper Frank Keegan of the 82nd Airborne in EA's Medal of Honor: Vanguard, the WWII franchise's opening salvo on Wii.

Among the many things that made World War II significant was the use of paratroopers by allied forces to insert soldiers behind enemy lines, essentially enabling them to fight battles on multiple fronts. The latest chapter in EA's much-lauded World War II first-person-shooter series celebrates the contribution of the war's first paratroopers by centering on a fictional member of the 82nd Airborne Division, Frank Keegan, as he drops into battles across the European theatre. The game begins during the 1943 invasion of Sicily, known as Operation Husky, in which paratroopers offered support for traditional ground forces, and continues through 1945's Operation Varsity, which was largely an air-based attack on Nazi Germany, and one of the last big pushes to end the war.

Ever since the Wii control scheme was revealed, gamers and game developers have been talking about how the remote and nunchuk will redefine the FPS genre for consoles. Activision's Call of Duty 3 was the first WWII FPS to prove that theory. Now the other big gun in the business will give it a shot. EA assures us that the previously announced Medal of Honor: Airborne title is still in the works for a 2007 Wii release, but Vanguard will lead the charge for Medal of Honor on March 26th. —George S.



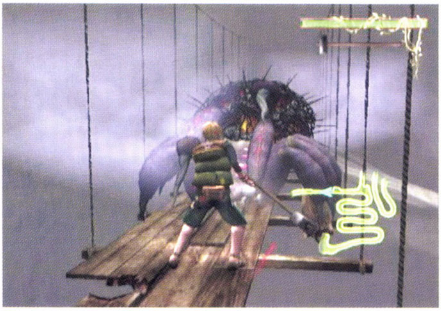
After you drop behind enemy lines, Axis soldiers will attack from every direction. Luckily, you have fellow paratroopers to cover you as you advance.

STICK IT TO 'EM

Insecticidal Maniac

Oh, the horror! Behemoth butterflies, massive mantises, and other things that go squish in the night await in Eidos' Escape from Bug Island for Wii.

Who needs zombies when you can face the unbridled terror of enormous bugs—and beat them to a pulp? As its title implies, the chills in newly announced Wii survival-horror game Escape from Bug Island (released as Necro-Nesia in Japan) stem from battling legions of insect enemies in a camping trip gone horribly wrong. As you use the Wii remote and nunchuk to mimic the motions of bashing bugs with sticks, rocks, and other weapons, you must navigate the treacherous Beelzebub Island and escape with your life. The folks at publisher Eidos promise that in addition to squashing the livin' larvae out of creepy-crawly foes, you'll use the Wii controls to overcome obstacles like lethal pits and falling rocks. You may wish to stock up on insecticide (and/or giant flyswatters) for the game's spring release. —Chris H.



It: a one-ton spider with legs the size of tree trunks, and spikes on its rear end. You: a guy with a broom. Good luck with that.

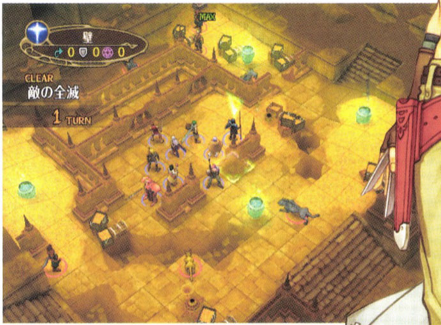
NEWS FROM JAPAN!

Role-Playing Rapture

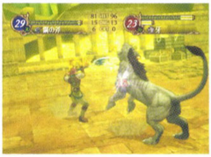
Big RPG news out of Japan this month—we've got the first details on Fire Emblem: Goddess of Dawn and an update on the flood of DS epics coming from Square Enix.

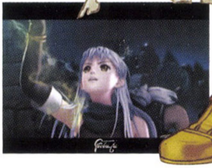
Fire Emblem: Goddess of Dawn

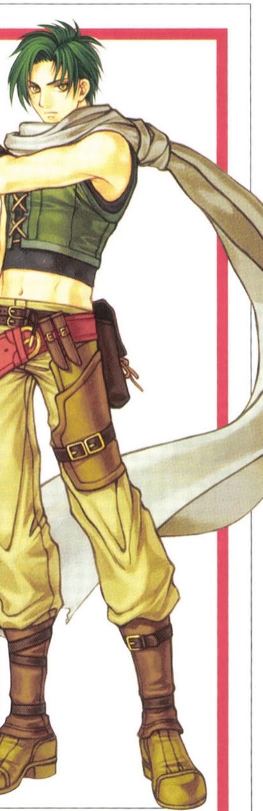
Wii owners in Japan won't have to wait long for the console's first full-blown strategy-RPG, Fire Emblem: Goddess of Dawn. The game is a direct sequel to Path of Radiance, picking up the story three years after the fierce war between Crimea and Daein. The saga begins in the land formerly known as Daein, and follows a small band of freedom fighters as they oppose a tyrannical rule set in place by the neighboring nation of Begnion. While the turn-based action looks similar to Path of Radiance, the cast of characters are altogether different this time around. You'll start with four characters, only one of which—a young, green-haired thief named Sothe—appeared in the previous game. Sothe and his sister will lead the pack as they journey across the continent of Tellius and beyond, recruiting new party members of both the Beorc and Laguz races. How the game will use the the Wii remote remains a mystery, as does a North American release date. We'll keep you posted. —Andy M.



Classic Fire Emblem action is alive and well in Goddess of Dawn, with new obstacles such as multilevel battlefields to up the ante.

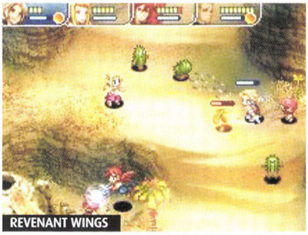


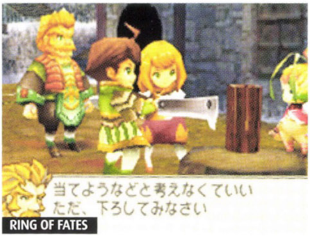




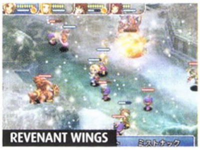
Jump Festa

At the recent Jump Festa event in Japan, Square Enix showcased a number of its upcoming DS titles, including the first in-game screens and footage for FINAL FANTASY XII: Revenant Wings and an updated look at FINAL FANTASY Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates. You can check out the trailer for Revenant Wings at www.square-enix.co.jp/ff12rw and for Ring of Fates at www.square-enix.co.jp/ffcc/movie. As you can see, Crystal Chronicles is looking quite a bit better than it did at its E3 debut last year. The publisher also announced FINAL FANTASY Tactics A2 for DS. It's going to be a good year. —Steve T.

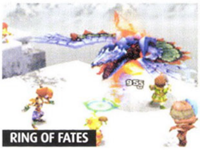

REVENANT WINGS



RING OF FATES



REVENANT WINGS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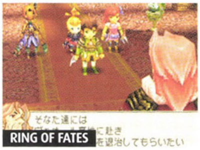
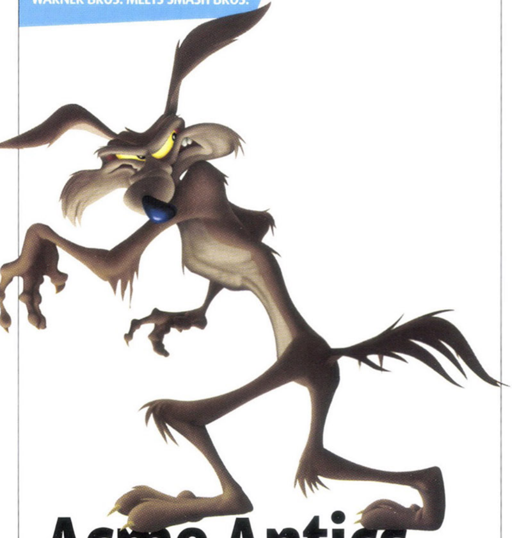


RING OF FATES

WARNER BROS. MEETS SMASH BROS.



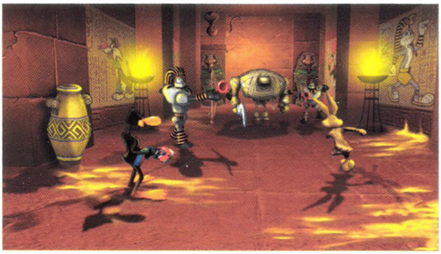
Acme Antics

A gaggle of classic Warner Bros. characters gathers for an animated brawl versus the evil scientist in a Looney Wii release.

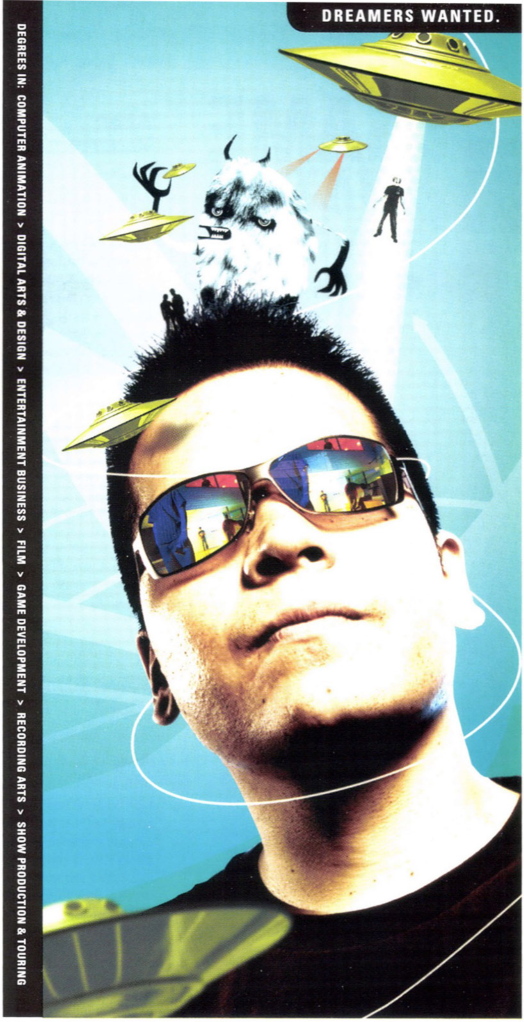
Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck have been hitting each other over the heads with frying pans and sending each other sticks of dynamite for years. This fall the pair will set aside their differences and team up to take on the bald menace of the evil scientist in locations as exotic as Camelot, ancient Egypt, and the trenches of World War II in an as-of-yet-untitled Looney Tunes adventure for Wii. In addition to Bugs and Daffy, Taz, Foghorn Leghorn, Marvin the Martian, hairy beast Gossamer, and an undisclosed character will get into the act for single-player or two-player co-op action, battling robots sent from the present day to the past with orders to erase the cartoon characters from existence.

Warner Bros. Interactive expects to make use of Wii's motion-based control by allowing players to swing giant mallets and other ACME-produced weapons, execute spin attacks, and pilot vehicles (such as jet scooters) on their way to victory against the scientist's mechanoids.

—George S.



A screen shot mock-up illustrates the game's potential graphic style. The look may evolve as the game moves toward its fall release.



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GAME WATCH FORECAST

Does anyone even read this little commentary on the Game Watch Forecast, or are we just babbling needlessly like Willard Scott? Hey, Esther McClurg turns 102 today!

Announced / In Development / Ready for Release

Game Title — Publisher — ●●●

Game Title — Publisher — ●●● — New games added to the list

Wii

Game Title	Publisher	
Battalion Wars 2	Nintendo	●●○
Big Brain Academy	Nintendo	●●○
The Bigs	2K Sports	●○○
Bionicle Heroes	Eidos	●●○
Blazing Angels: Squadrons of WW II	Ubisoft	●●○
Blitz: The League	Midway	●●○
Bust-a-Move Bash!	Majesco	●○○
Cooking Mama: Cook Off	Majesco	●○○
Disaster: Day of Crisis	Nintendo	●●○
Dragon Quest Swords: The Masked Queen and the Tower of Mirrors	Square Enix	●●○
Escape from Bug Island	Eidos	●●○
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Crystal Bearers	Square Enix	●●○
Fire Emblem☆	Nintendo	●●○
The Godfather	Electronic Arts	●○○
Harvest Moon Wii☆	Natsume	●●○
Heatseeker	Codemasters	●●○
Legend of the Dragon	American Game Factory	●○○
Line Rider	inXile	●○○
Looney Tunes☆	Warner Bros. Interactive	●●○
Mario Party 8	Nintendo	●●○
Mario Strikers: Charged	Nintendo	●●○
Medal of Honor: Vanguard	Electronic Arts	●●○
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●●○
Mercury Meltdown Revolution	Ignition	●●○
Metroid Prime 3: Corruption	Nintendo	●●○
Mortal Kombat: Armageddon	Midway	●●○
One Piece: Unlimited Adventure	Namco Bandai	●●○
Prince of Persia: Rival Swords	Ubisoft	●●○
Project H.A.M.M.E.R.	Nintendo	●●○
Shrek the Third	Activision	●○○
Sonic and the Secret Rings	Sega	●●○
SSX Blur	EA Sports	●●○
Super Mario Galaxy	Nintendo	●●○
Super Paper Mario	Nintendo	●●○
Super Smash Bros. Brawl	Nintendo	●●○
Tamagotchi: Party On!	Namco Bandai	●●○
Tiger Woods PGA Tour☆	EA Sports	●○○
TMNT	Ubisoft	●●○
Transformers: The Game	Activision	●○○
Wii Play	Nintendo	●●●

NINTENDO DS

Game Title	Publisher	
A Boy and His Blob	Majesco	●●○
Arthur and the Invisibles	Atari	●●●
Asphalt: Urban GT 2	Ubisoft	●●○
Biker Mice from Mars	American Game Factory	●○○
Cake Mania	Majesco	●●○
California Games	System 3	●●○
Cameltry	TBA	●●○
Cartoon Network Racing	American Game Factory	●●●
Chibi-Robo: Park Patrol	Nintendo	●●○
Chronos Twin	Lexicon	●●○
Code Lyoko	American Game Factory	●○○
Custom Robo Arena	Nintendo	●●○
Death, Jr. and the Science Fair of Doom	Konami	●●○
Diddy King Racing DS	Nintendo	●●●
DK King of Swing DS☆	Nintendo	●●○
Dragon Quest IX☆	Square Enix	●●○
Drake & Josh	THQ	●○○
DS Air☆	Nintendo	●●○
Dynasty Warriors☆	Koei	●●○
Etrian Odyssey	Atlus	●●○
Europa Universalis II	Pocket PC	●●○
F-24 Stealth Fighter	Majesco	●●○
Final Fantasy XII: Revenant Wings	Square Enix	●●○
Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates	Square Enix	●●○
GoPets	Konami	●●○
Hardcore Pool	UFO Interactive	●●○
Hotel Dusk: Room 215	Nintendo	●●●
Impossible Mission	System 3	●●○
Indiana Jones 2007☆	LucasArts	●○○
InuYasha: Secret of the Divine Jewel	Namco Bandai	●●●
Izuna: Legend of the Unemployed Ninja	Atlus	●●●
Kim Possible: Global Gemini	Buena Vista	●●○
Konami Classic Series: Arcade Hits	Konami	●●○
Legend of the River King☆	Natsume	●○○
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords☆	Nintendo	●○○
The Legend of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass	Nintendo	●●○
Line Rider	inXile	●○○
Lost in Blue 2	Konami	●●○
Lunar Knights	Konami	●●●
Marvel Trading Card Game	Konami	●●●
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●○○
Mega Man Star Force	Capcom	●●○
Meteos: Disney Magic	Buena Vista	●●○
Monster Rancher☆	Tecmo	●○○
Moonlight Fables☆	Majesco	●○○
Nanostray 2	TBD	●●○
Naruto: Ninja Council 3	D3PA	●●○
One Piece☆	Namco Bandai	●●○
Panzer Tactics DS☆	CDV Software	●●○
Paws & Claws: Pet Vet	THQ	●●○
Pokémon Diamond	Nintendo	●●○
Pokémon Pearl	Nintendo	●●○
Princess Natasha: Student, Secret Agent, Princess	Destination	●●○
Puzzle de Harvest Moon	Natsume	●●○
Puzzle Quest: Challenge of the Warlords	D3PA	●●○
Quad Desert Fury 2	Majesco	●○○
Rafa Nadal Tennis	Codemasters	●●●
Rayman Raving Rabbids	Ubisoft	●●○
Shrek Smash and Crash Racing	Activision	●●○
Shrek the Third	Activision	●○○
SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS	SNK	●●○
Spectrobes	Buena Vista	●●○
Steel Horizon	Konami	●●○
TMNT	Ubisoft	●●○
Transformers: The Game	Activision	●○○
Trioncube	Namco Bandai	●●●
Ultimate Brain Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Card Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●○
Undercover: Dual Motives	Anaconda	●○○
Wario: Master of Disguise	Nintendo	●●○
Winning Eleven: Pro Evolution Soccer 2007	Konami	●●●
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Spirit Caller	Konami	●●●
Zendoku	Eidos	●●○
Zoey 101	THQ	●○○

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Game Title	Publisher	
Backyard Baseball 2007	Atari	●●○
Backyard Basketball 2007	Atari	●○○
Backyard Football 2007	Atari	●○○
Foodfight!	Global Star	●●○
Mini-Golf Mayhem	Crave	●○○
Shrek Smash & Crash Racing	Activision	●●●
TMNT	Ubisoft	●●○
World Championship Poker	Crave	●●○

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Game Title	Publisher	
Arthur and the Invisibles	Atari	●●●
ATV: Thunder Ridge Riders	Destination	●●○
Camp Lazlo: Leaky Lake Games	Crave	●●○
Danny Phantom: Urban Jungle	THQ	●●○
Drake & Josh	THQ	●○○
Family Feud	Global Star	●●○
Final Fantasy VI Advance	Nintendo	●●●
Foodfight!	Global Star	●●○
Ghost Rider	2K Games	●●●
Hardcore Pool	UFO Interactive	●●○
Hot Wheels: All Out	Destination	●●○
Hugo: Bukkazoom	Namco Bandai	●●○
Koala Brothers: Outback Adventures	American Game Factory	●●○
Legend of the River King Advance	Natsume	●●○
Little Einsteins	Buena Vista	●●○
Mazes of Fate	Graffiti Ent.	●●●
Meet the Robinsons	Buena Vista	●○○
Metal Slug	SNK	●●○
Monster Truck Mayhem	Destination	●●○
Pirate Battle	Orbital	●●○
The Proud Family	Disney	●●○
Santa Claus Saves the Earth	Telegames	●●○
Shrek Smash and Crash Racing	Activision	●●●
Shrek the Third	Activision	●○○
Spider-Man: Battle for New York	Activision	●●○
Super Robot Monkey Team Hyperforce Go!	Disney	●○○
TMNT	Ubisoft	●●○
Ultimate Pocket Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Puzzle Games	Telegames	●●○
Ultimate Table Games	Telegames	●●○
VeggieTales: LarryBoy and the Bad Apple	Crave	●●○
W.I.T.C.H.	Buena Vista	●○○
World Poker Tour 2K6	2K Sports	●○○
World Reborn	Destination	●●○
X-Bladez: Inline Skater	Crave	●●○
Xyanide	Playlogic	●○○
Zoey 101	THQ	●○○

☆ TENTATIVE TITLE

NEWS BYTES

Alien Resurrection

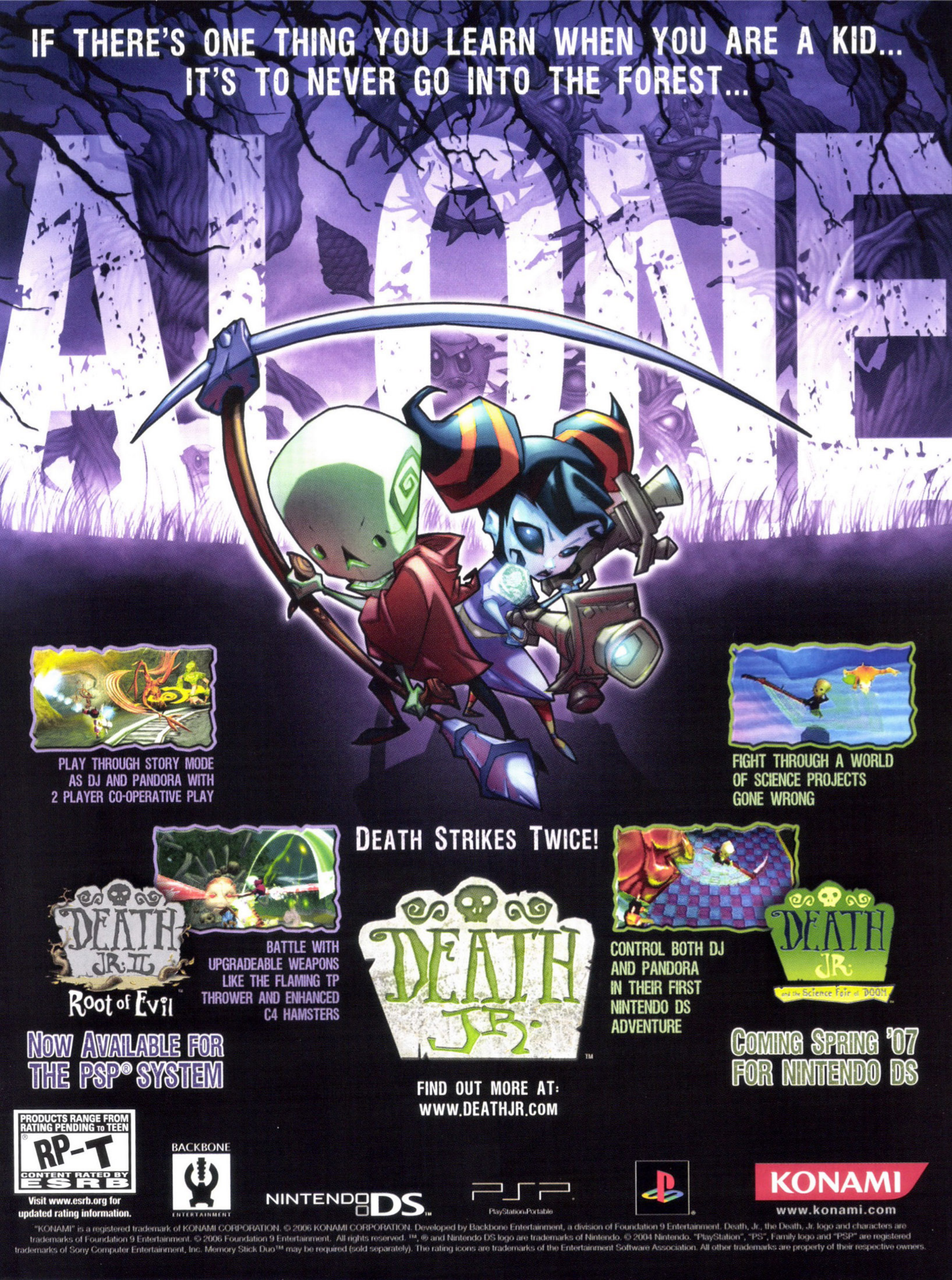
Sega announces pair of titles based on classic film franchise.

Sega has revealed that it will publish two new games set in the Alien universe—not to be confused with the recently announced Alien Syndrome (a follow-up to the classic arcade title of the same name). One of the games will be a first-person shooter developed by Gearbox Software, the studio behind the critically acclaimed Brothers in Arms series. The other will be an RPG from Obsidian Entertainment, which previously worked on Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic II for Xbox. Specific platforms have not been announced for either title.

What About Blob?

Mercury Meltdown Revolution oozes onto Wii in 2007.

Ignition Entertainment announced that its liquid-metal-themed puzzle series Mercury Meltdown Revolution should hit North American store shelves this spring. The game challenges players to steer a blob of mercury through futuristic laboratories. Ignition president Paul Robinson promises state-of-the-art blob physics and excellent control: "The Wii Remote is a true complement to the Mercury series as the original game design was intended for a tilt controller."



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SUPER SMASH BROS. Brawl

Wii SMASH FILES #08

LINK

FIRST GAME APPEARANCE:
The Legend of Zelda - NES (1987)

KNOWN FOR:
Courage, wisdom, power

BIOGRAPHY:
Link is the very definition of a hero. Garbed in the traditional green tunic and armed with a blade that can smite evil, Link is a versatile adventurer and skilled swordsman who has the blood of Hyrulian legends coursing through his veins. Throughout the ages, a brave youth named Link has appeared whenever the wicked Ganon or other dark forces have threatened the land—to date, Link has vanquished Ganon, rescued Princess Zelda, and saved the Triforce on numerous occasions. The latest incarnation of Link is more mature than most of his counterparts, and he has the ability to transform into a wolf—although it remains to be seen if Link utilizes this power in Brawl.

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E 10+
Animated Blood
Mild Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
Mild Suggestive Themes
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

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New Pokémon are coming. So are the warriors of SNK and Capcom. Prepare to catch them all!

Cake Mania Pg. 26
Pokémon Diamond & Pearl Pg. 27
Rayman Raving Rabbids Pg. 26
SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS Pg. 28
Super Paper Mario Pg. 24
TMNT Pg. 25

Super Flat

> SUPER PAPER MARIO

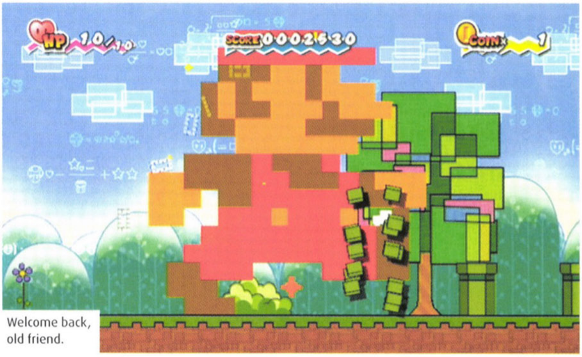
PLATFORM: **Wii** • PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Intelligent Systems** • RELEASE: **April 2007**

At last year's E3, Nintendo debuted Super Paper Mario to a warm reception—then it seemed to just drop off the face of the Earth. Well, no longer. The action-platformer is now being revamped for Wii, and it's shaping up to be one of the most exciting—and flat-out bizarre—games of the year.

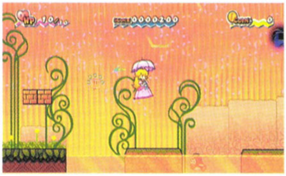
Super Paper Mario begins like so many Mario games—Bowser has kidnapped the princess, and Mario and Luigi must leave home to rescue her. But that's where the familiarities end. Mario soon finds himself in the interdimensional town of Flipside, where a creepy black hole looms overhead and math equations are floating through the ether. And to make things even more peculiar, the plumber soon gains the ability to abandon the side-scrolling 2-D world at will and view the paper-esque action from a 3-D perspective. This ability makes for some of the most unique platforming puzzles in years. Often you'll be stuck on a level, and need to switch to 3-D to see a character or a pathway that wasn't visible in 2-D. It's a clever twist on the old Paper Mario worldview.

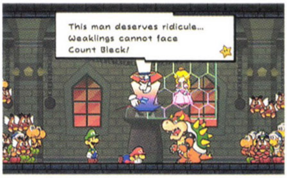
You'll control the action by holding the Wii remote sideways, moving with the Control Pad and jumping with the 2 Button. Pressing the A Button will switch the game's dimensional viewpoint. These are the basic controls, but as you progress you'll recruit tagalong creatures called Pixls that will bestow Mario with new abilities—some of which make interesting use of the Wii remote. Tippy, for instance, is a butterfly that allows you to search areas for secrets. With Tippy in tow, you can point the Wii remote at the screen to spotlight hidden doors or learn valuable information about an enemy. There are a number of other noteable uses of the Wii remote. When you jump on an enemy, for instance, a well-timed shake of the controller will rack up extra points.

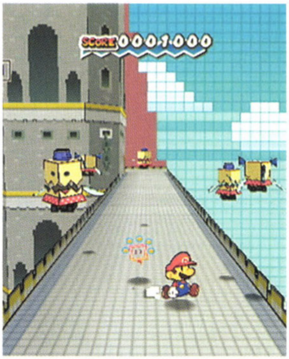
But this is all just the tip of the iceberg. Super Paper Mario is incredibly deep, and every chapter introduces gameplay elements that revolutionize the platforming experience. It also looks amazing, boasting noticeable graphical enhancements over the E3 version. With the game tailored so well to Wii, it has quickly become one of our most anticipated games of '07—its April release date can't come soon enough. —Andy M.



Welcome back, old friend.




This man deserves ridicule...
Weaklings cannot face Count Bleck!



HP 10/10
SCORE 0007117
COIN x 7
EXCELLENT

Cowabunga Nights

>TMNT

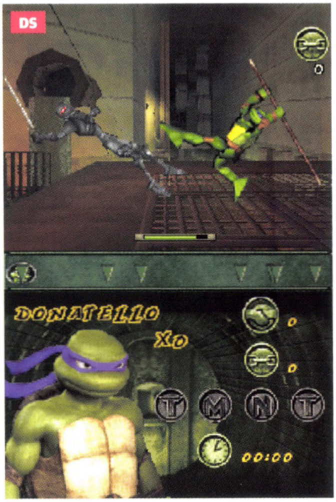
PLATFORM: Wii, GCN, DS, GBA • PUBLISHER: Ubisoft
DEVELOPER: Ubisoft Montreal • RELEASE: March 2007

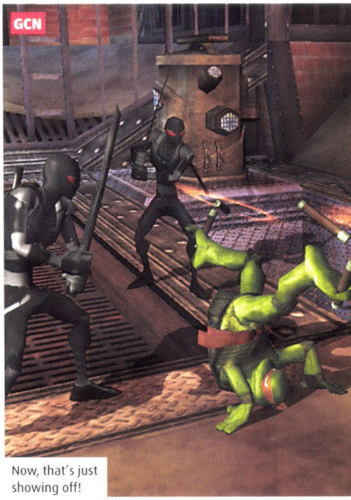
A jump to Ubisoft from long-time publisher Konami has the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles exploring new territory—and old—in a slew of games based on the upcoming TMNT CG movie. The console title (Wii and GCN) uses Ubisoft's Jade engine (developed for the company's recent Prince of Persia titles) to let the turtles execute ninjitsu fighting moves and high-flying acrobatics over New York City rooftops. Imagine the prince from Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones using a bo staff to strike enemies and pivot around his environment, and you can picture Donatello's fighting style. Raphael clears the streets of Foot Clan toughs and Purple Dragon gang members with his sai punching power while Leonardo and Michelangelo use their own signature moves. Though the game is a single-player adventure, the turtles work together to comb the city for crooks and hidden areas. Co-op moves allow the hard-shelled heroes to seek out alternate routes and team up for devastating attacks. Ubisoft has not released details on how the Wii version will use motion control, but martial-arts action makes it the perfect game for the Wii's nunchuk controller.

The DS title offers a unique take on athletic maneuvering by using a context-sensitive jumping system. When you direct one of the heroes to a location from which he can jump, markers appear on one or more destinations. You press one of three jump buttons (left, middle, or right) to make the hero hop to the desired location. In situations where the reptilian acrobats hop to the tops of flagpoles and other precarious places, you have a fraction of a second to make your character leap to the next place before he loses his balance. A choice of destinations results in branching paths.

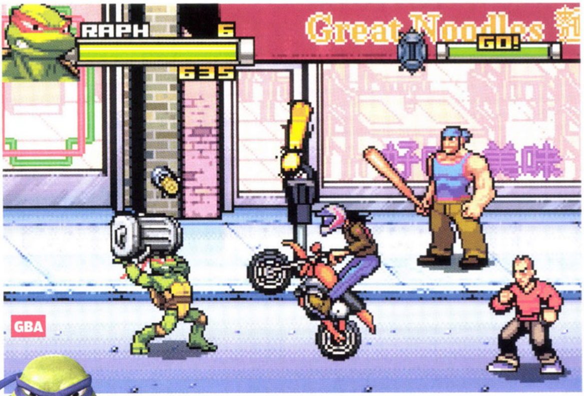
The GBA game is an old-fashioned Final Fight-style 2-D brawler in which the turtles take turns battling groups of enemies. Foes drop weapons, such as baseball bats and swords, which the turtles can use to bash more baddies.

The games both follow and go beyond the plot of the first TMNT theatrical release in 14 years, which focuses on the team's battle to overcome monsters amassed by mastermind Max Winters. Locations include the sewers, subways, and alleys of New York, as well as a jungle and underground caverns. The turtles have had more comebacks than Prince since their '80s heyday, but a new game publisher and the sheer number of titles give this one a chance to make a big impact. —George S.





Now, that's just showing off!



Enemies can't touch Donatello with a 10-foot pole.

Rabbid Recovery

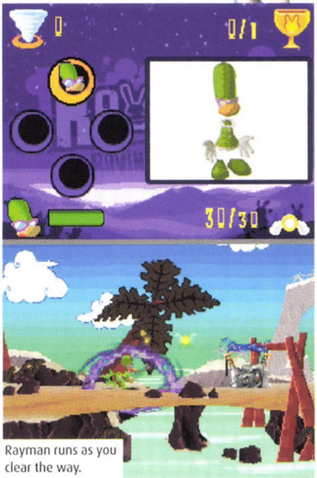
>RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS

PLATFORM: DS (ALSO ON Wii, GBA) • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
DEVELOPER: UBISOFT • RELEASE: MARCH 2007

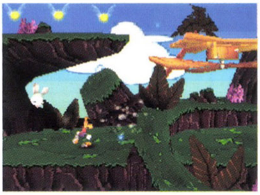
This thieving Rabbid is pulling off a two-carrot heist.

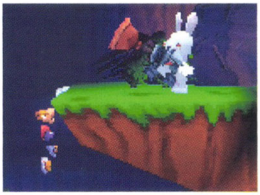
They may have suffered defeat in Rayman's Wii minigame collection, but the wigged-out Rabbids are back for more punishment in the DS version of Rayman Raving Rabbids—and Ubisoft's nimble limbless hero is back to platforming form. The environment incorporates 3-D graphics, but the gameplay is old-school 2-D with lots of long gaps and moving platforms. As you hop and huck Lums at furry foes, you can earn four costumes that give you the ability to crush enemies and get past obstacles. In some sections, Rayman runs through levels on his own steam while you use your stylus to interact with objects and Rabbids, clearing the way for the costumed hero. You can even blow into the microphone to send a Rabbid spaceship off course.

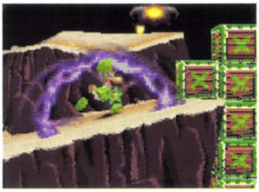
The object is to collect 100 trophies and unlock extras, such as pictures of the Moron Bunnies, Time Attack mode, and several minigames. —GEORGE S.



Rayman runs as you clear the way.





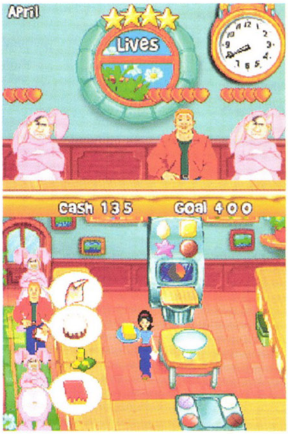


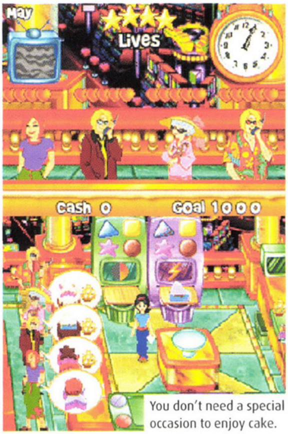
This One Takes the Cake

>CAKE MANIA

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: MAJESCO
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL EMBRYO • RELEASE: SPRING 2007

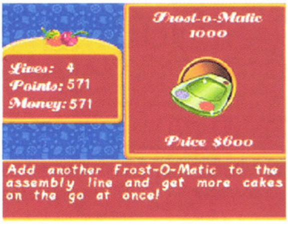
Majesco's Cooking Mama served up a delicious entree. Now it's time for dessert. This spring the publisher brings PC point-and-bake sim Cake Mania to the DS for 80 levels of confectionary creation. Encompassing both the original Cake Mania and expansion pack Back to the Bakery, the game puts you in the shoes of amateur-baker-gone-pro Jill Evans as she tries to save her family's mom-and-pop operation from conglomerate Mega-Mart. As customers file into the place, you use touch control to hand out menus, take orders, select cakes, decorate them, and collect cash. With your earnings you can purchase new ovens, frosting machines, cake-decorating devices, and other items that will help maintain your business, such as sensible shoes (Jill does a lot of running while filling orders) and a television for customers to watch as they wait for their treats. Advanced levels bring increasingly challenging orders and new bakery locations. If you show your baking-and-business chops, you can expand the business to a circus, a casino, and a Hawaiian beach. —GEORGE S.





You don't need a special occasion to enjoy cake.

Baker Goal Reached!



Lives: 4
Points: 571
Money: 571

Add another Frost-O-Matic to the assembly line and get more cakes on the go at once!

Priceless Pokémon

>POKéMON DIAMOND & POKéMON PEARL

PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: GAME FREAK inc. • RELEASE: APRIL 2007

Not all is well in Sinnoh. A group of nefarious thugs called Team Galactic has cooked up a plot that threatens the region. Not that you were planning to do anything about it—your aspirations to become a Pokémon Trainer begin only when you stumble across a collection of Poké Balls owned by a man named Professor Rowan, an expert on all things Pokémon. Now you're caught up in a story full of intrigue and action, and there's only one way to succeed—become the best Trainer in the land. Along the way, you'll prove your worth to the professor and your family by completing the Pokédex, a digital register of all the Pokémon you've seen and caught; it'll be a tough challenge in a world with more Pokémon than ever before.

Along with Professor Rowan, one other main character is your rival. He grew up with you in Twinleaf Town, the small village where you begin your adventure. Even though you two battle each other quite a bit, there will also be times when you will cooperate against Team Galactic.

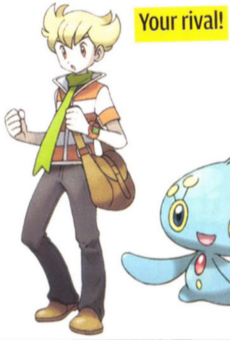
As a Trainer one important tool at your disposal is the Pokétch, a pocket computer that contains many useful gadgets and displays. At first there are only a few devices within the Pokétch—there's a pedometer that counts your footsteps, a calculator, and a clock, to name a few. As you progress in the game, you'll add on to the Pokétch—it'll become as indispensable as your Pokédex.

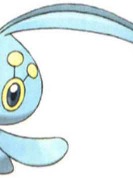
You'll find new Pokémon just about everywhere you go, but some of them will look familiar, and with good reason. For example, along your journey you will encounter Munchlax, the pre-evolution to Snorlax. Like its evolved form, Munchlax is a Normal type with a big appetite. You'll also run across Weavile, the evolved form of Sneasel. The Dark/Ice-type has the powerful Revenge attack at its disposal.

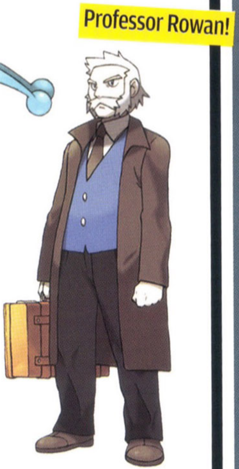
Diamond and Pearl feature two Legendary Pokémon: Dialgia and Palkia. Depending on which version you play, you'll have the opportunity to catch one of these two special creatures.

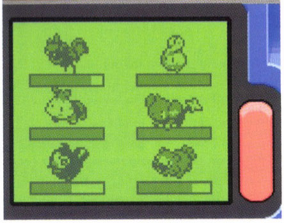
If you've played Pokémon Ranger, you've definitely heard rumors of the Manaphy Egg. By visiting Pokemon.com and getting a special code for your Pokémon Ranger game, you'll have the chance to find the rare object. If you can get your hands on the Manaphy Egg, you can import it into Diamond and Pearl. There, it will finally hatch into Manaphy, a wide-eyed Water-type Pokémon that knows an exclusive new move: Heart Swap, which swaps healing effects with another Pokémon.

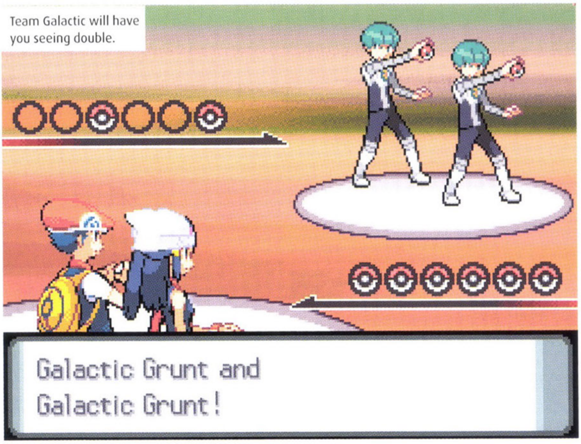
Look for much more information regarding Pokémon Diamond and Pokémon Pearl as we lead up to the games' April 22nd launch. —CHRIS S.






Professor Rowan!





Team Galactic will have you seeing double.

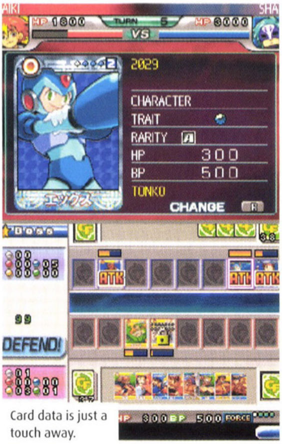
Galactic Grunt and
Galactic Grunt!

Card-Combat Collision

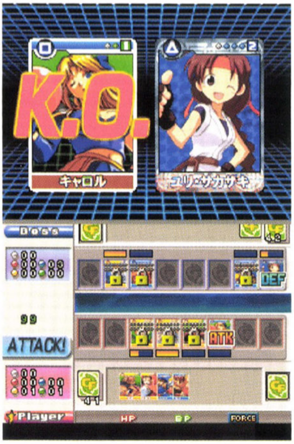
>SNK VS. CAPCOM CARD FIGHTERS DS

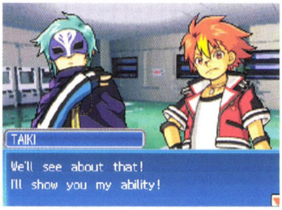
PLATFORM: DS • PUBLISHER: SNK PLAYMORE
DEVELOPER: SNK PLAYMORE • RELEASE: FEBRUARY 2007

Pick a card. Any card. Will you get Ryu from Street Fighter II? Maybe Iori from The King of Fighters, Albert Wesker from Resident Evil, or Cham Cham from Samurai Shodown? You might even receive ace attorney Phoenix Wright, Final Fight's Mike Haggar, or the heroes of the Metal Slug series. Whatever hand you're dealt, you're in for one of the most addictive card-battling games to ever hit a video game system. For the uninitiated, SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS is a follow-up to the highly acclaimed SNK vs. Capcom Card Fighter's Clash released for the ill-fated NeoGeo Pocket back in 1999; like its predecessor, Card Fighters DS lets you engage in strategic battles by using a vast array of cards to attack, defend, and ultimately deplete your adversaries' HP to claim victory. Though the basics are simple to master, the game has a wealth of depth thanks to special moves, unification attacks, the ability to "back up" other cards by boosting their HP, and more. Even grizzled Card Fighters vets will find an overload of new features here, including separate stats for each card's HP and attack power; a more complex cost system that determines which cards and abilities you can use at any given time; and full touch-screen control for navigating the game world, using your cards, and even ripping open booster packs. Just as significant as the gameplay is the ability to collect nearly 400 cards featuring characters from all over the Capcom and SNK universes, ranging from popular franchises like Mega Man to lesser-known games such as Twinkle Star Sprites. In addition to a story mode (in which you attempt to defeat an evil supercomputer that's brainwashing people and trying to take over the world via card battles—what!?), you can try your skills against human opponents and wager cards or virtual cash on the outcome. —CHRIS H.

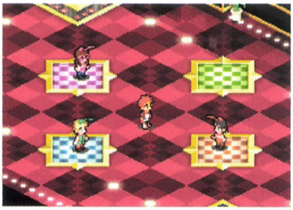


Card data is just a touch away.




TAIKI

We'll see about that!
I'll show you my ability!



Are you man enough to play cards with me?

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HANG ONTO
YOUR Wii REMOTE.
THIS'LL BE ONE
WILD RIDE.
SONIC™
and the Secret Rings
FEBRUARY 2007
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New Blue

Sega's fleet-footed mascot blazes a new trail in Sonic and the Secret Rings, exclusively for Wii.

By Steve Thomason

Going fast is fun. That's why people spend $300,000 on a Lamborghini. It's why they slide down a snow-covered mountain on a narrow piece of fiberglass. And it's why Sonic the Hedgehog is one of the biggest names in all of gaming. With Sonic and the Secret Rings, Sega's blue blur exploits that simple truth—going fast is fun—more effectively than we've seen him do in quite some time.

In his Wii-exclusive debut (due in March), Sonic is always on the move—literally. The hedgehog constantly runs forward without any input from the player. You simply steer him by holding the Wii remote horizontally and tilting it left and right. There's a host of other gameplay elements that we'll get to shortly, but that's the core concept. It essentially takes the roller-coaster-type thrills that were the highlights of previous installments—loop de loops, chase scenes, etc.—and builds an entire game around them like never before. "Originally, we were going to produce Sonic the Hedgehog, the game we did for Xbox 360, on all platforms, including Wii," reveals Secret Rings' producer Yojiro Ogawa. "But after we looked at the Wii remote and the features of the controller, we decided to produce a new, completely different Sonic title for the system. I already had this basic idea [of Sonic constantly moving forward] in my mind, and when Sega asked me to produce the Wii game, I thought it would be a perfect fit."

Indeed, what we've played thus far had us on the edge of our seats. The game strings together one high-speed set piece after another in a way that wouldn't be possible if the player had full control over Sonic's movement. One early stage has you sprinting down the back of a huge brontosaurus, then running from a herd of stampeding triceratops before hopping on a log as you plummet from the top of a waterfall and use the flotsam to navigate the rapids below. You always feel like you're on the verge of barreling out of control, but riding that edge is what makes the game so exciting (especially since the limited range of motion also eliminates most of the camera frustrations from Sonic's previous 3-D outings). Other stages will see you navigating the wreckage of a pirate ship on the stormy seas, exploring a treacherous fossil yard, and running along floating paths in the sky that lead to ancient ruins atop giant flying beasts.

Though it wouldn't be misleading to describe the action as being on

Wait, was there an Optimus Prime story in *The Arabian Nights*?

BACK TO BASICS

PURE HEDGEHOG

Ever since making the transition to 3-D, Sega's signature series has strayed from what made it so great in the first place. Sonic and the Secret Rings gets back to basics by stripping away some of the extraneous elements.

NO TREASURE HUNTING

Sonic's the only playable character, so you don't have to worry about falling asleep while digging around for some hidden knickknack.

NO WONKY CAMERA

One happy result of Sonic staying on a linear path is that the camera never wigs out.

NO BROODING ANTI-HERO

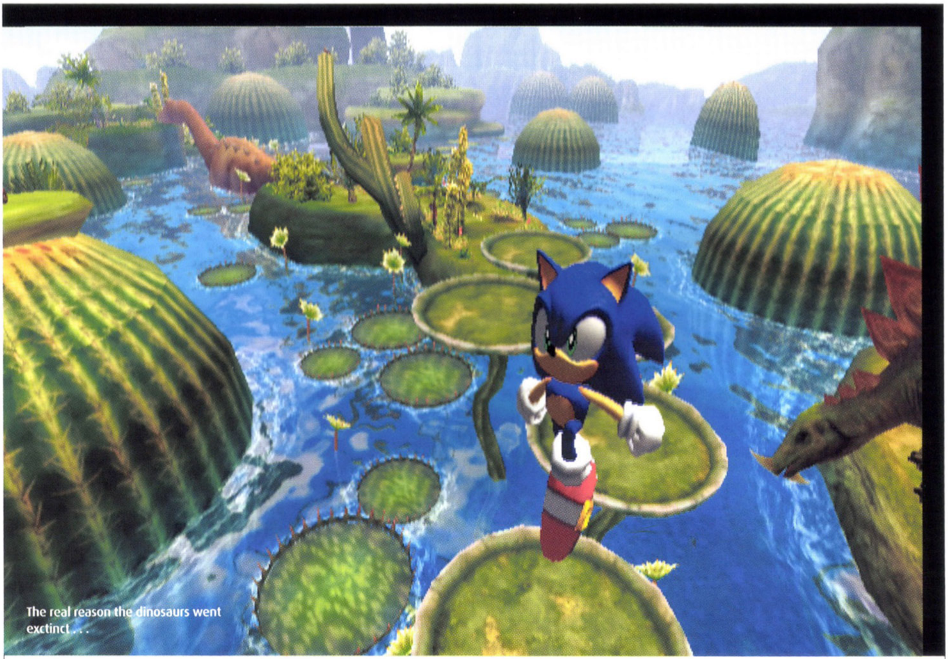
If we wanted some angsty, spikey-haired bad boy to drag us down, we'd play FINAL FANTASY VII. That's a joke! We kid the FINAL FANTASY!

NO GUNS

Every once in a while, it's nice to play an action game in which you don't have to shoot things.

NO BIG THE CAT

Best of all, Sonic and the Secret Rings is completely devoid of dim-witted, morbidly obese felines. We think.



The real reason the dinosaurs went exctinct . . .

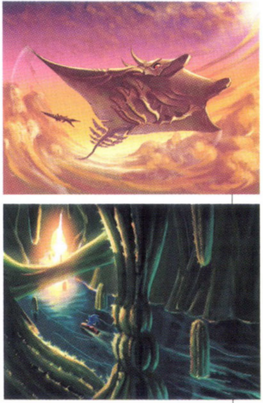
rails, there is more to Sonic and the Secret Rings than just moving left and right. The game also serves up a healthy dose of platforming. You press the 2 Button to jump (the longer you hold it, the higher Sonic will leap), and you flick the remote while Sonic is in midair to perform his trademark homing attack (physically moving the controller to launch the hedgehog at enemies feels great). The forced forward movement puts a unique slant on the platforming segments, and elevates the sense of tension when you're trying to pull off a series of tricky jumps. Should you wish to slow things down a bit, you can press the 1 Button to hit the breaks. You won't need to do it very often, but it's a lifesaver during the particularly stiff challenges later in the game.

A number of context-sensitive actions are sprinkled throughout the adventure as well. You'll swing from ropes by moving the remote back and forth to gain momentum, take a magic carpet ride by tilting the controller in the desired direction, and even fire Sonic from a catapult by twisting the remote toward you then snapping it forward to let him fly. They're all elements of the roller-coaster ride, slowing things down a bit and providing a nice change of pace before the next big rush.

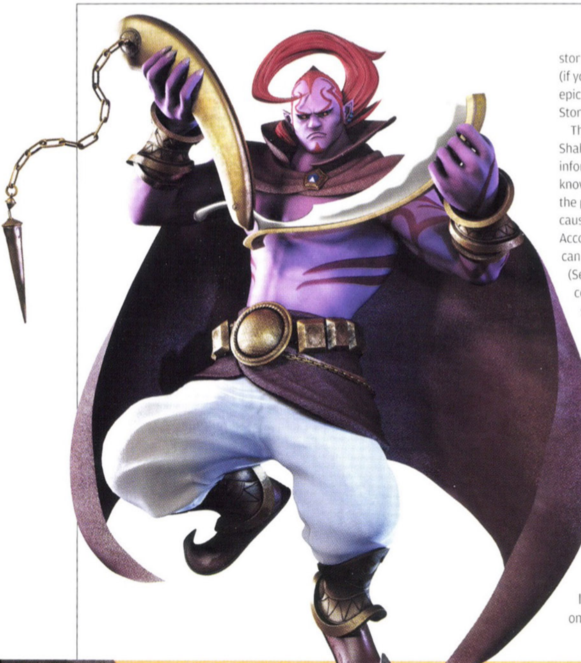
Of course, all good roller coasters finish with a bang, and in Sonic and the Secret Rings, that finale comes in the form of some impressive boss battles. One especially memorable encounter pits our hero against a hulking metallic monstrosity that emerges from a pool of molten steel. Sonic runs around a circular walkway that surrounds the boss (not unlike in Sonic Rush), and when the beast grabs onto the adjacent ledges to pull himself up, you have to attack his fingers to make him let go. That causes the boss to sink low enough for you to run up his shoulder and nail the weak spot atop his head. It's an absolute blast, and a marked improvement over the bosses we've seen in other recent Sonic titles.

Into the Nights

This is Ogawa's first time heading a Sonic project (though he also contributed to the original Sonic Adventure), and having previously worked on such diverse titles as Phantasy Star Online, Feel the Magic: XY/XX, and Panzer Dragoon Saga, it's not surprising that he brought a fresh perspective to the series. "Once Sega decided to do a Sonic title specifically for Wii, I wanted to make a game that was completely different from the Sonic the Hedgehog that [the other team] had been making for the Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3," recalls the producer. "When we first started thinking about it, the system was still called the Revolution. So we thought we should revolutionize Sonic. I wanted to do something that people haven't seen in previous Sonic titles." One way to do that, Ogawa decided, was to set the game in the



As you play through the adventure mode, you'll unlock more than 200 bonus goodies, including this gorgeous concept art.



storybook world of *The Arabian Nights* (if you're unfamiliar with the literary epic, see "The Story Behind the Stories" sidebar on the next page).

The tale begins when a genie named Shahra appears before Sonic and informs our hero that an evil entity known as the Erazor Djinn is absorbing the power of *The Arabian Nights* and causing the pages to disappear. According to legend, the only one who can defeat him is a blue hedgehog. (Seeing as that's not an altogether common combination of color and species, Sonic probably seemed a likely candidate.) After cracking wise in his own inimitable way, the blue blur agrees to let Shahra transport him into the book so he can stop the Erazor Djinn from destroying the tome's worlds.

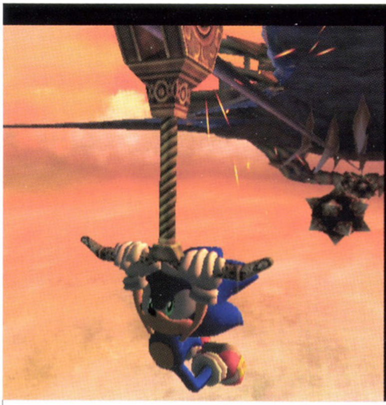
While *The Arabian Nights* may initially seem like an odd thematic choice for Sega's brightly colored mascot, it gives the game a flavor that's unique to the series. Cutscenes are done in a sketchbook presentation that fits the motif like a glove, the levels are all based on different stories from the literary epic, and the music is an interesting blend of Arabian-style melodies and "classic" Sega guitar rock. The team has also done a wonderful job of melding the theme with the Sonic universe. Familiar faces make an appearance not as themselves, but as characters within *The Arabian Nights*—Knuckles takes on the role of Sinbad, Tails plays Ali Baba, and even Dr. Eggman shows up as a bumbling king of Persia. Additionally, the secret rings referred to in the title take the place of the series-staple Chaos Emeralds: they possess unparalleled power in the world of *The Arabian Nights*, and you must collect all seven of them to see the game's true ending (that's all Ogawa would tell us about the rings; they are secret, after all). It feels a bit like Kingdom Hearts—a compelling twist on a beloved franchise that longtime fans in particular are going to eat up.

The spectacular lighting makes for some breathtaking scenes.

Super Sonic

Another big change is that you can add new skills (a whopping 100 in total) to Sonic's repertoire, RPG-style. By completing certain objectives and earning medals (more on that in a bit), you'll earn such powers as an extended range for Sonic's homing attack, the ability to move more quickly from left to right, and even new moves like canceling a jump in midair to execute a ground pound. Before you can utilize a skill, however, you must first equip it by spending a certain number of skill points. Upon completing each stage, Sonic will gain experience based on your score; as he levels up, you'll earn those skill points. You can turn skills on and off as you see fit (unequipping a skill will give you its points back), but you'll rarely have enough points to equip all of your skills at once. You must therefore decide which ones will be the most helpful for the mission at hand, and tailor the hedgehog to specific challenges. According to Ogawa, there are also tons of secrets and hidden routes that you can reach only with specific skills, which should boost the game's replay value.

Leveling up also increases Sonic's capacity to use a pair of special superpowers that he has at his disposal from the get-go. The first, Speed Break, may establishe a new velocity record for the expeditive critter. Sonic moves so fast that everything whizzes by in a blur, essentially bypassing large chunks of the stage. Time Break does exactly the opposite, slowing things down à la *The Matrix*, making it easier



This might be a good time for our hero to hit the brakes.

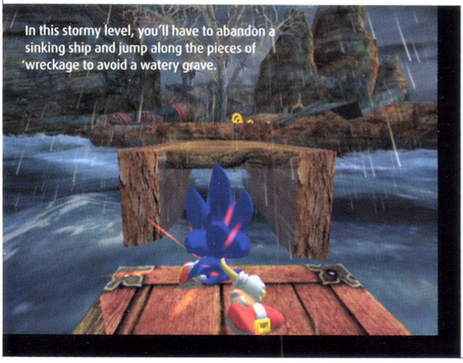
to deal with certain enemies and obstacles. To utilize either of these powers, you must fill a special gauge by collecting the energy pellets that are scattered along your path. As Sonic's level increases, so does the size of the gauge, allowing him to use Speed Break and Time Break for longer periods of time.

This concept of powering up Sonic is one of the reasons the hedgehog is going solo for the first time in years. "I realized that many of the other characters [in the series] were becoming too strong," says Ogawa. "Usually when we create a Sonic title, we create the Sonic parts first, then add some powers to each of the other characters to differentiate them. But as a result, those other characters end up being stronger than Sonic. With this game, I wanted to focus solely on Sonic and allow the players to customize him according to their own tastes."

Hedgehog on a Mission

There are eight stages in Sonic and the Secret Rings, each consisting of 12 missions with different stipulations. The first is always to simply reach the end of the stage, but others might require you to collect 99 rings or to race an opponent to the goal. As Ogawa explains, "Depending on the mission, the length of the level varies. There are some missions that are very long and take maybe eight minutes to complete, while there are other missions that are only a small section of the level, and will take only one or two minutes." Many of the missions also branch out to different areas of the stage that you might not see on previous run-throughs.

You'll earn a bronze, silver, or gold medal (depending on your performance) for each mission that you complete. You needn't finish every mission to play through the main story, but earning medals will both unlock new skills (as mentioned previously) and open pages in the Special Book, a collection of over 200 bonus features including concept art, historical tidbits celebrating Sonic's 15th anniversary, and more. And of course, completing missions is much easier if you make strategic use of your skills. In a mission that requires you to reach the goal without collecting any

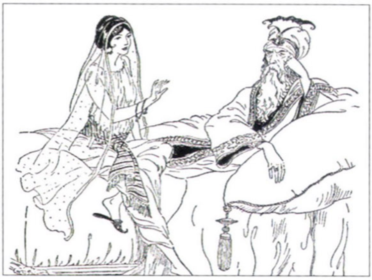


In this stormy level, you'll have to abandon a sinking ship and jump along the pieces of wreckage to avoid a watery grave.

FERTILE EPIC

The Stories Behind the Story

Arabian Nights is a compilation of Middle Eastern fables that includes such famous tales as Aladdin, The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor, and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. Within the framework of the book, Queen Scheherazade relays the stories to her husband, King Shahryar, over a period of one thousand and one nights in an effort to delay her execution. Every night, she ends the story with a cliffhanger, forcing the captivated King to keep her alive for another day. The individual stories are thought to originate from traditional Persian, Arabic, and Indian folk tales, and were collected over many centuries. The book remains an important literary work, and has inspired countless films and television series.



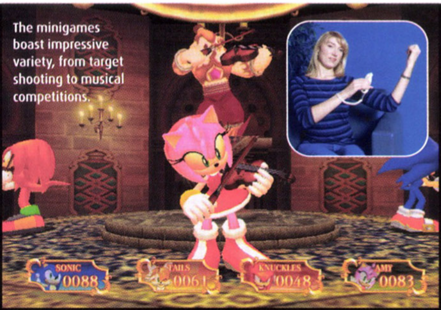
rings, for instance, you might want to equip a skill that slows Sonic down, making it easier to avoid the gold sparklies.

Party Animals

Complementing the single-player adventure is a surprisingly full-featured party mode with approximately 40 minigames. While minigame collections aren't particularly scarce on Wii, a selection of game boards gives Sonic's four-player shindigs an overarching purpose. On the board we played—Genie's Lair—the winner of each minigame gets to open one of 30 or so treasure chests. Each chest contains either a coin, in which case you have the option of opening an additional chest, or a booby trap, which will rob you of all your coins from that round. Players can try to memorize what's in each chest, but certain traps will rearrange the board. Of course, whoever ends up with the most coins at the end of the game wins. It's not as complete a multiplayer experience as something like Mario Party, but it's pretty close.

More importantly, the minigames themselves are a lot of fun. One of our favorites has your character (there are four to choose from at the beginning, and an additional four that you can unlock) loaded in a giant crossbow. You aim the remote at a target and press the A Button, then pull back as you would the string of a cross bow and release A to fire. Your poor character hits the target with a splat and sticks there comedically until everyone has had a turn. (Coincidently, this might be the first time a Sonic game is genuinely funny.) Another game puts everyone in a cave filled with treasure boxes (not to be confused with the treasure chests from Genie's Lair). When you pick up a box, you can shake the remote to hear how much loot is inside via the speaker. When time runs out, whoever's holding the box with the most treasure inside wins, so everyone will be trying to listen to each other's remotes. If you think someone is holding a more lucrative box than yours, you can make him drop it by throwing your box at him. Perhaps the highlight, however, was a game that simulates a violin performance. The computer violinist starts by playing a short melody, and each player must slide the remote (which acts as the bow for the violin) back and forth in the correct rhythm to replay the tune as closely as possible. During our demonstration, Ogawa went first and held his left arm out like he was actually holding a violin, then moved the remote back and forth above the crook of his elbow. Although the rest of the party laughed at the producer, they couldn't help but do the same when their turns came around. (Tragically, it didn't help your humble author much—I went last, and by the time it was my turn I had completely forgotten the melody and proceeded to play something that would not fit even the loosest definition of music.)

Combine those multiplayer shenanigans with the opportunity to go fast like never before in the single-player adventure, and Sonic and the Secret Rings looks like one of next year's most promising Wii titles. It hits that sweet spot that every entry in a long-running franchise aspires to: feeling familiar in all the rights ways, yet offering a fresh experience that breathes new life into the series.


The minigames boast impressive variety, from target shooting to musical competitions.

39
SONIC 01
TAILS 00
KNUCKLES 00
AMY 00

36
SONIC 00
TAILS 00
KNUCKLES 00
AMY 00

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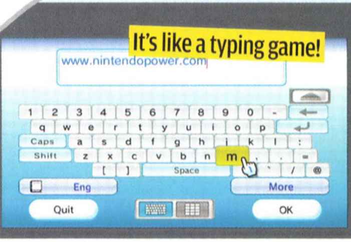
Wii Channels

The Content Keeps Coming

December and January brought a storm of activity to the Wii: our gutters runneth over with new Virtual Console games, a web browser, and some interesting nongame content.



It's like a typing game!

www.nintendopower.com

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 -
q w e r t y u i o p
Caps a s d f g h j k l :
Shift z x c v b n m , . =
[ ] Space ` / @
Eng
More
Quit
OK

THIS MONTH:

- Web Surfing
- Weather and News
- New Virtual Console Titles

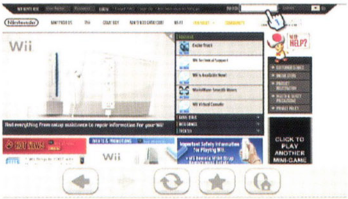
16

New Games

INTERNET CHANNEL: YOU'LL LIKE THIS OPERA

Wii owners were treated to an early Christmas present in 2006: a trial version of a web browser that allows them to surf the web on their TV. The beta version of the Opera browser—developed by Norwegian firm Opera Software ASA—can handle the majority of what the web throws at you (exceptions include MP3s and some other media files). Now you can check your email without getting up from the couch, or show your friends the latest streaming video without forcing everyone to huddle around your PC monitor.

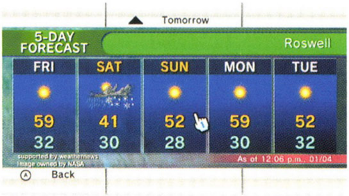
The final version of Opera will be available in March, and you'll still be able to download it for free until June—after that, it'll cost you 500 Wii Points. It's still unclear what differences you'll see in the final version—so check back here for updates. Software development ain't over 'til the fat lady sings.


Nintendo
Wii
NEED HELP?
HOT NEWS
CLICK TO PLAY ANOTHER MINI-GAME

Thanks to the precise control of the Wii remote, you can click on fields and enter text with ease—no keyboard required.

FORECAST AND NEWS CHANNELS: Wii COVERS THE WORLD

What with all the Virtual Console games, you may be steering clear of the nongame content available on the Wii Channels. It may be that you think the Forecast Channel and the News Channel lack the visceral appeal of, say, Gunstar Heroes—and you'd be correct. But we're going to try to change your mind anyway. The Forecast Channel offers detailed local and international weather information through an easily navigable interface. The News Channel—scheduled for rollout in late January—delivers headlines from the Associated Press, one of the most respected news sources in the world. So if zombies rise and walk the earth, the AP will know about it and tell you on Wii News Channel. And the Forecast Channel will tell you if you need to bring an umbrella when you flee the city in panic. Didn't think of *that*, did you, smart guy?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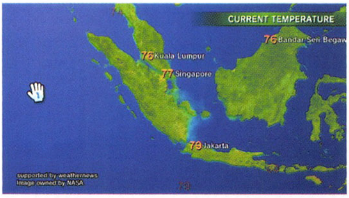
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76 Bandar Seri Begaw
76 Kuala Lumpur
77 Singapore
79 Jakarta
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VIRTUAL CONSOLE:

CHECK OUT WHAT'S NEW ON THE Wii SHOP CHANNEL

ALIEN CRUSH

PLATFORM: **TURBOGRAFX16**
PUBLISHER: **NEC/HUDSON SOFT**
GENRE: **PINBALL**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1989**

WHAT: A video pinball game with a sci-fi motif, and the predecessor to the much-lauded Devil's Crush.

WHY: Virtual pinball got a whole lot more exciting on the TurboGrafx16. Pinball (NES) was fun, but Alien Crush brought the pastime to a whole new level.

BONANZA BROS.

PLATFORM: **SEGA GENESIS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

WHAT: A clever two-player co-op action game in which you rob from the rich and give to yourselves.

WHY: Because it's good to be bad (even if you are allegedly helping the cops). The sneaking-style action separates Bonanza Bros. from other games of its era.

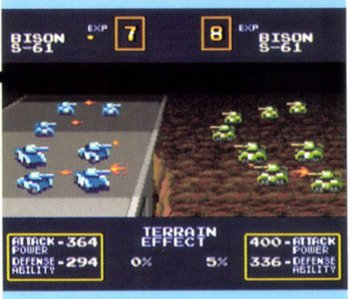
COMIX ZONE

PLATFORM: **SEGA GENESIS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1995**

WHAT: A high-concept action brawler that takes place on the pages of a comic book. As an artist trapped in your own story, you'll need to fight your way between panels.

WHY: Because you like *Tron* and the animated short in which Daffy Duck is victimized by a cartoonist.

VIRTUAL CONSOLE SPOTLIGHT



MILITARY MADNESS

STEVE'S PICK

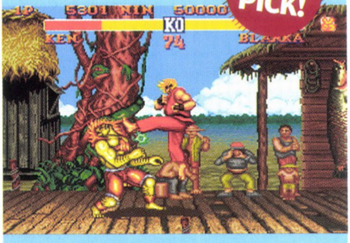
PLATFORM: **TURBOGRAFX-16**
PUBLISHER: **NEC/HUDSON SOFT**
GENRE: **STRATEGY**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1989**

It may not be as deep or complex as modern-day strategy games like Advance Wars, but Military Madness is still more than capable of putting your tactical chops to the test. It's also one of the most sought-after Turbo games among collectors, so it's nice to be able to play its fiendishly addictive battles without having to scour eBay.

STAFF PICK!

VIRTUAL CONSOLE SPOTLIGHT

STAFF PICK!



STREET FIGHTER II: THE WORLD WARRIOR

CHRIS H.'S PICK

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**
GENRE: **FIGHTING**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

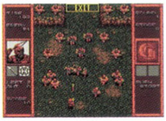
Younger gamers might not remember, but when Street Fighter II hit arcades back in 1991, it was bigger than Pokémon. Its superprecise six-button fighting, diverse cast of warriors, and genre-defining special moves changed the gaming landscape. The SNES version that came out a year later was nearly arcade-perfect. Street Fighter II is nothing short of a phenomenon.

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **PLATFORMER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1994**

WHAT: Romp through Donkey Kong Island as DK or Diddy Kong to recover your stolen bananas.

WHY: Rare's groundbreaking platformer featured the first use of prerendered 3-D graphics in a game for a home console.



GAIN GROUND

PLATFORM: **SEGA GENESIS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

WHAT: Mix Gauntlet, Commando, and Fire Emblem together and you get Gain Ground—a top-down action game that relies on quick reflexes and smart decision-making.

WHY: Although Gain Ground is reminiscent of a lot of other games, there really hasn't been another title like it.

3 1P 0011200 HI 0050000

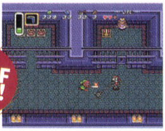
GRADIUS

PLATFORM: **NES**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1986**

WHAT: A scrolling space shooter that originated as an arcade game and became a console classic, inspiring many shooters to come.

WHY: Smooth difficulty curve, fast-paced action, fearsome boss battles, awesome music, and a sweet power-up system—Gradius is 8-bit action at its best.

VIRTUAL CONSOLE GAMES CONTINUED



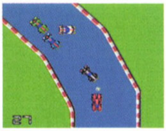
STAFF PICK!

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **ADVENTURE**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

WHAT: The third installment in the revered series, A Link to the Past marked a return to the format that made the original so great, while introducing a number of Zelda staples, including the Master Sword.

WHY: It's arguably the most important game in the series.

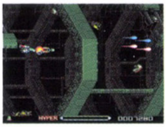


MOTOROADER

PLATFORM: **TURBOGRAFX16**
PUBLISHER: **NEC/HUDSON SOFT**
GENRE: **RACING**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1989**

WHAT: A tricked-out, top-down racer that allows you to win big on the racing circuit, then spend your cash on better parts for your car.

WHY: Rally-X wasn't deep enough for you. Truly grotesque 16-bit characters introduce the races.



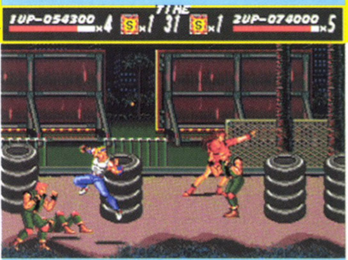
R-TYPE III: THE THIRD LIGHTNING

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **JALECO**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1994**

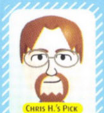
WHAT: Another rock-solid shooter in the venerable R-Type series. Three different weapons systems are available for your R-Type: Round, Shadow, and Cyclone.

WHY: The same furious gameplay you've always loved—now frosted with delicious options.

VIRTUAL CONSOLE SPOTLIGHT



STREETS OF RAGE



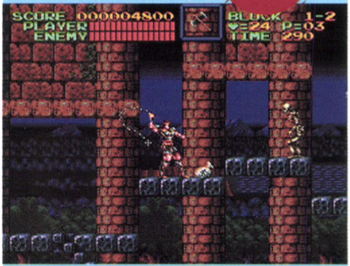
PLATFORM: **SEGA GENESIS**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

STAFF PICK!

Sega's answer to Final Fight, Streets of Rage is one of the finest side-scrolling beat-'em-ups ever created. The cooperative gameplay lets players pound waves of punks across eight varied levels, and it sounds incredible thanks to the techno beats of legendary game composer Yuzo Koshiro. Streets of Rage has been absent from recent Sega game collections, so its appearance on Virtual Console is not to be missed.

VIRTUAL CONSOLE SPOTLIGHT

STAFF PICK!



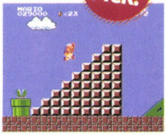
SUPER CASTLEVANIA IV

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

CHRIS S.'S PICK

If you're familiar only with Castlevania's more recent adventure-oriented incarnations, you must experience Super Castlevania IV. Not only was it the best-looking and -sounding Castlevania to date, but it featured all-out vampire-slaying action in its purest form. Wild Mode 7 effects and the ability to grapple with your whip make the game especially fun.

STAFF PICK!

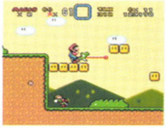


SUPER MARIO BROS.

PLATFORM: **NES**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **PLATFORMER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1985**

WHAT: One of the most popular video games ever. Super Mario Bros. ushered in the era of power-ups and warp zones and had a generation of gamers uttering the phrase, "Thank you Mario! But our princess is in another castle!"

WHY: Not just a console-gaming history lesson, Super Mario Bros. offers tightly tuned play that both newbies and platforming veterans can enjoy.



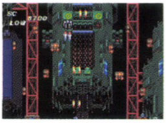
SUPER MARIO WORLD

PLATFORM: **SUPER NES**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **PLATFORMER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

WHAT: With the help of dinosaur sidekick Yoshi, Mario chases Bowser and kin across the Mushroom Kingdom.

WHY: Widely considered the best platformer of all time, the playful graphics and lively soundtrack epitomize the glory years of 16-bit gaming.

STAFF PICK!



SOLDIER BLADE

PLATFORM: **TURBOGRAFX16**
PUBLISHER: **NEC/HUDSON SOFT**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

WHAT: Take on wave after wave of alien spaceships in this fast-paced vertical shooter. Acquire power-ups that modify your weapons and provide support craft to fly alongside you.

WHY: Despite being one of the best shooters of its generation, its distribution in America was very limited.

Enjoying your Wii?

Here are a few reminders:

Remember: Wear the wrist strap when using the Wii Remote. Make sure all players use the wrist strap and that the strap lock is correctly tightened. When sharing the Wii Remote between multiple players, make sure each person using the remote properly uses the wrist strap.

Remember: Don't let go of the Wii Remote during game play. Simply release the button on the remote. Hold the remote securely and avoid excessive motion during game play. If your hands become moist, stop and dry your hands.

Remember: Allow adequate room around you during game play. Stay at least three (3) feet away from the television. As you move around during game play, make sure objects and other people are out of your range of movement or arm motion to prevent damage or injury.

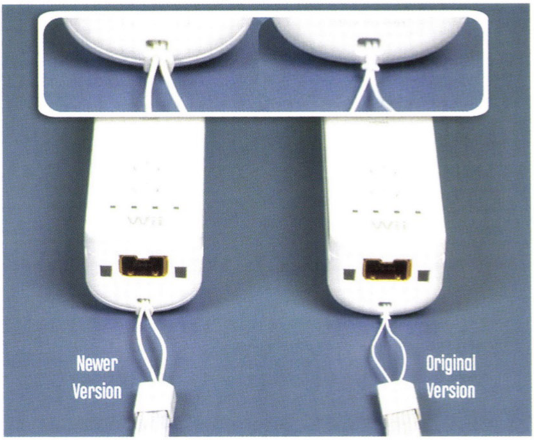
WRIST STRAP REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

For more information on Wii safety, please visit www.nintendo.com/consumer/wiisafety.jsp

Nintendo has received some reports that when consumers swing the Wii Remote with the original version of the wrist-strap using excessive force and accidentally let go, the cord connecting the controller to the wrist strap can break, potentially causing the Wii Remote to strike bystanders or objects.

Nintendo is offering to replace the original version of the wrist straps for the Wii Remote with a newer version for free. The cords on the original wrist straps are 0.6 mm in diameter, and the cords on the replacement straps are 1.0 mm. Please check the wrist strap on your Wii Remote to see if you have the original or new version (see picture at right). Wii video game systems purchased after December 11, 2006 should have the new 1.0 mm cord. Individually sold Wii Remotes purchased after December 18, 2006 should also have the 1.0mm cord.

For more information on obtaining replacement wrist straps, please call (800) 859-4519 or visit www.nintendo.com/consumer/strapreplace.jsp



Better Gaming Through Science

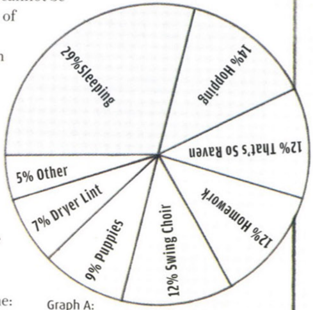
A recent middle-school study proves that liberal application of the Wii can transform even the most hopeless non-gamer into a Super Smash Bros. opponent.

By Anonymous

Fig. 1
Subject A has proven on a number of occasions that he lacks the baseline knowledge to even turn on a game console.

Subject A represents a shrinking minority at Darwin Middle School: improperly socialized non-gamers who fail to integrate with the general population of self-actualized adolescents. Non-gamer status can result in ill-used leisure time, a dopey expression when conversation turns to gaming, and profound embarrassment for the non-gamer's friends. Indeed, the effect of recalcitrant non-gaming on the non-gamer's friends cannot be underestimated! An early observation of Subject A's behavior revealed that he totally ruined a friend's conversation with a girl at camp when he interjected a comment about some stupid baby sitcom for babies when the friend had invested substantial time and ingenuity into getting the girl to play Elite Beat Agents with him on the porch swing. The aforementioned friend was then shunned by the girl for the remaining five days of camp.

Anyway, I propose an experiment to assimilate Subject A into gamer culture through a multi-phased introduction to games on the Wii (see "Experiment Design" below). The optimal outcome: a less dorky Subject A.



Graph A:
Subject A interests (pre-experiment)

Experiment Design

Goal A healthy interest in video games and other relevant topics can be artificially induced.

Hypnotism

Not an option after last year's failed experiment.

Systematic Wii Exposure

Phase 1: Inclusive games suitable for non-gamers.
Phase 2: Slightly challenging party games.
Phase 3: Challenging games.
Phase 4: Hard-core games.

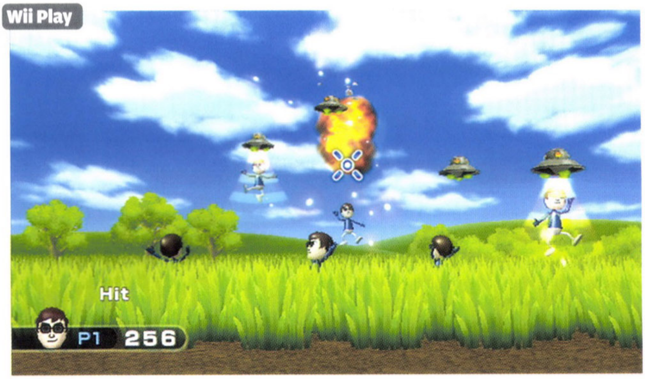
Desired Outcome

A well-adjusted gamer who can be taken out in public without shame (e.g., someone who can be challenged to a game of Super Smash Bros. Brawl).

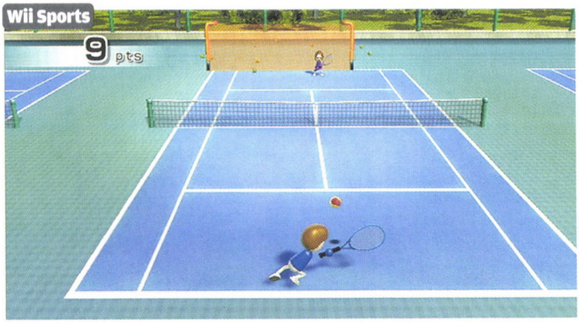
Illustrations by Sonny Liew

Phase 1: Games Suitable for Nongamers

Subject A was lured into a controlled environment under the pretense that he would be shown the video for a new novelty song by Weird Al Yankovic. An assistant quickly locked the door, then a Wii remote was placed in Subject A's hand. After making sure that the wrist strap was properly secured, the Wii Play disk was inserted into the console and Subject A was positioned in front of the television. After a short period of disorientation and mild drooling, Subject A managed to hit one target in the Shooting Range game. A panel of observers noticed small positive changes in Subject A's countenance as he moved through all the Wii Play games. Within two hours, he could move a tank and fire its cannon simultaneously. Supplemental experiments with Wii Sports yielded similar results. An exit interview revealed that Subject A was more concerned with scoring 100 in Table Tennis than watching the Yankovic video. The panel of observers was hella pleased, and celebrated with gyros and sodas.



After Subject A shut up about some old episode of *The X-Files*, he managed to protect his Miis for 12.3 seconds. He had greater success when he held the Wii Remote with just one hand.



Subject A had no trouble understanding how to hit the ball and admired the innovative game design. It quickly became clear, however, that Subject A had never heard of tennis. Or baseball. Or bowling. He is a scratch golfer, however.

Subject A's disorientation and mild drooling subsided quickly, but he retained his dopey countenance.

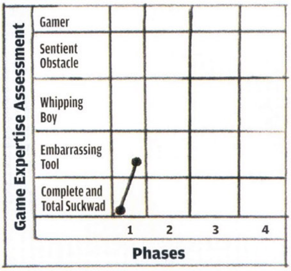


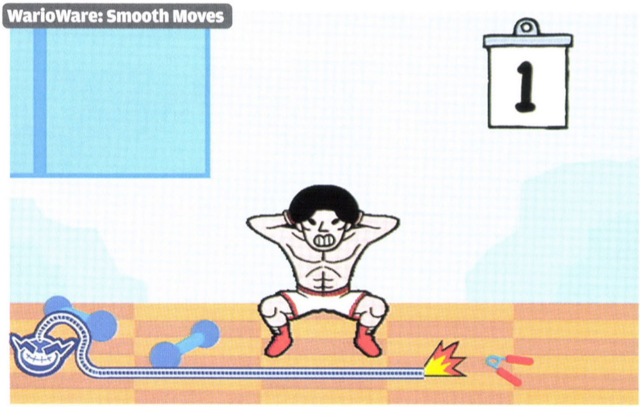
Chart 1
Subject A's gaming expertise was trending in a positive direction after just one session with Wii Sports and Wii Play.

Fig. 2
A secured wrist strap was essential in Phase 1 of the experiment.

Phase 2:
Games Suitable for Party People

After repeated tests with Wii Play and Wii Sports yielded the same positive results in Subject A, the observation team moved into Phase 2, the introduction of party games including but not limited to WarioWare: Smooth Moves and Mario Party 8. A Wii was placed in a larger test facility with a big sectional couch, and a control group of casual gamers was introduced. Subject A initially exhibited signs of social anxiety and confusion, but he quickly focused his attention on minigames involving poop and monkeys. One observer noted that Cindy Rasmussen was being way too nice to Subject A, given that fact that the observer had invited her to set up the experiment at his house—not at Subject A's house.

WarioWare: Smooth Moves



Subject A's incessant giggling, though annoying, did not affect his progress while playing WarioWare: Smooth Moves.

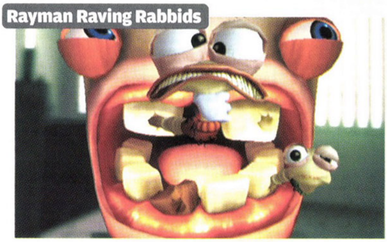
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Blitz

SCORE 0
043
:10
7
1
36mph
LEFT 23

Subject A could not reconcile the monkeys' apparent lack of oxygen with their level of exertion, but he enjoyed the game nonetheless.

Subject A was easily stimulated with poop, monkeys, and deranged rodents.

Rayman Raving Rabbids



Subject A spent a disproportionately long time at the dentistry booth during career day at school, so he had a special appreciation for games developed in Europe.

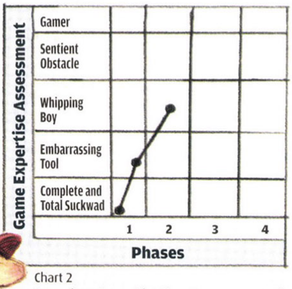
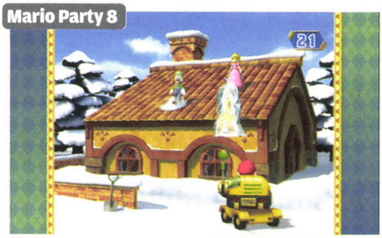


Chart 2
Several sessions with Wii party games earned Subject A a small amount of social acceptability.

Fig. 3
Near the end of Phase 2, Subject A fell down only once—a big improvement over his Phase 1 performance.

Mario Party 8



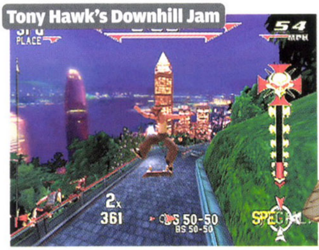
After studying 237 photographs of people playing Wii games in Nintendo Power, Subject A slowly became more demonstrative while playing Mario Party 8.

Phase 3: Challenging Games

Subject A elicited praise from observers who had doubted him.

When Subject A reached the benchmark in Phase 2—winning one four-person game after no more than 100 attempts—the main observer decided to move on to Phase 3. At the beginning of the experiment, some secondary observers totally doubted that Subject A would even make it to Phase 3, but the main observer now noted that their stupid mouths were shut. Subject A's motor skills began to improve dramatically. When playing Excite Truck, Subject A even elicited praise from some of the secondary observers who had doubted the main observer. After Subject A managed to play through all of Trauma Center: Second Opinion, the main observer opened a Save file in Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess.

Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam



After playing Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam for 10 hours, Subject A began to use the word "sweet" repeatedly. Unfortunately, the condition could not be reversed.

Fig. 4
During Phase 3, Subject A could hang out at the mall without attracting negative attention.

Excite Truck

1st
6/195
5.5
5:30.0
1/2
Lap
AIR
TEMP

One supplemental observer—let's call him "Richard Weed" for the purposes of this study—was impressed that Subject A could make his truck pull a 5-Star Air Spin. The same observer once called the experiment "retarded."

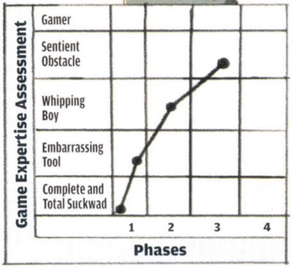
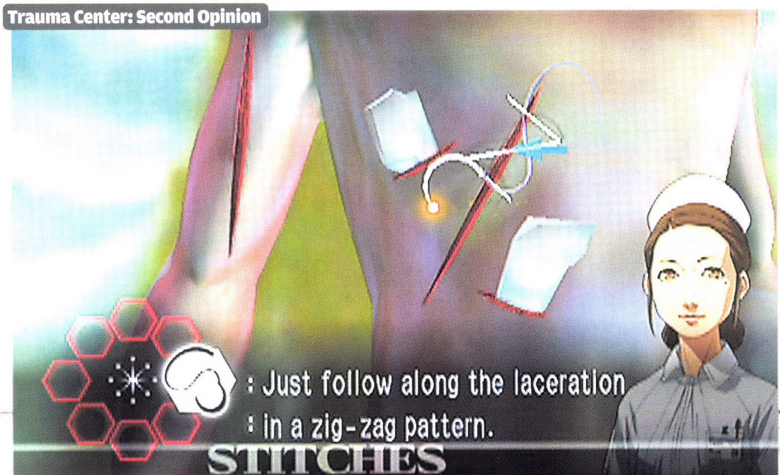


Chart 3
Subject A's progress in Phase 3 exceeded expectations. It was time to introduce him to Zelda.

Trauma Center: Second Opinion

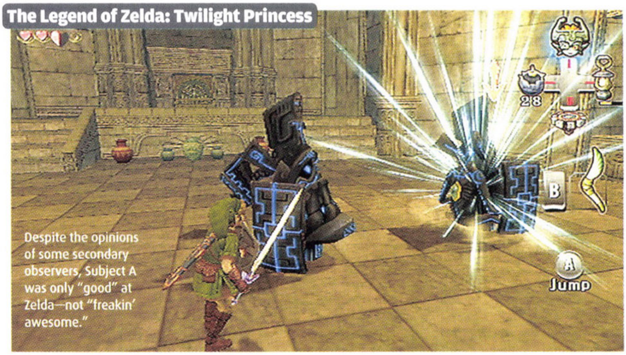


By the time he finished playing Trauma Center: Second Opinion, Subject A had stopped complaining about the nurses' annoying comments.

Phase 4:
Hard-Core Games

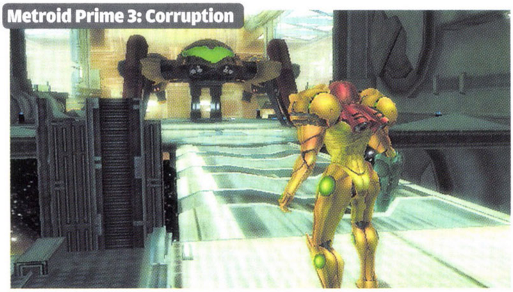
Moving into Phase 4, the main observer began to question if the experiment had been designed properly, as Subject A's gaming-expertise metrics seemed to be off the charts. After running the numbers multiple times, the main observer could not reconcile the fact that Subject A managed to defeat Yeta in that stupid leaf race when the observer, a skilled gamer, had repeatedly failed at the same task. Subject A then began to exhibit delusions of grandeur. Specifically, Subject A attempted to demonstrate how to defeat Yeta when he had clearly just gotten lucky three times. The main observer considered aborting the experiment, but two other observers noted that Super Smash Bros. Brawl is on the way, and an additional player may produce optimal results. The main observer also admitted that Cindy Rasmussen has several cute friends.

The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess



Despite the opinions of some secondary observers, Subject A was only "good" at Zelda—not "freakin' awesome."

Metroid Prime 3: Corruption



After Phase 4 was complete, Subject A was shown screenshots of Metroid Prime 3: Corruption. Observers collected 158 milliliters of drool. Success!

Super Smash Bros. Brawl

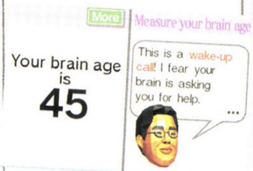
Subject A expressed interest in using Link. Observers thought it best to steer him toward a character that they don't want to use.

THE DS OPTION

Alternative Stimuli

For scientists who wish to repeat the experiment using the Nintendo DS, the main observer suggests using the following games.

Brain Age: Train your brain in minutes a Day
Experiments with my mom suggest that Brain Age offers an attractive entry point to video game culture. Additionally, nerds seem to find validation by playing the game.



Measure your brain age

Your brain age is 45

This is a wake-up call! I fear your brain is asking you for help. ...

Elite Beat Agents
Subjects tested using Elite Beat Agents responded well to its challenging stylus interface and totally kickin' tunes.

DASHHHHH
300
9x

New Super Mario Bros.
As a substitute for the Phase 3 Wii games, New Super Mario Bros. delivers the goods. The goods include a lot of jumping.

W6-3
×81
SCORE 02923160

Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin
For the Phase 4 gaming-expertise metrics, you couldn't ask for a better test than hitting skeletons and bats with a whip.

Subject A began to exhibit delusions of grandeur. He clearly thought he was better than at least one observer.

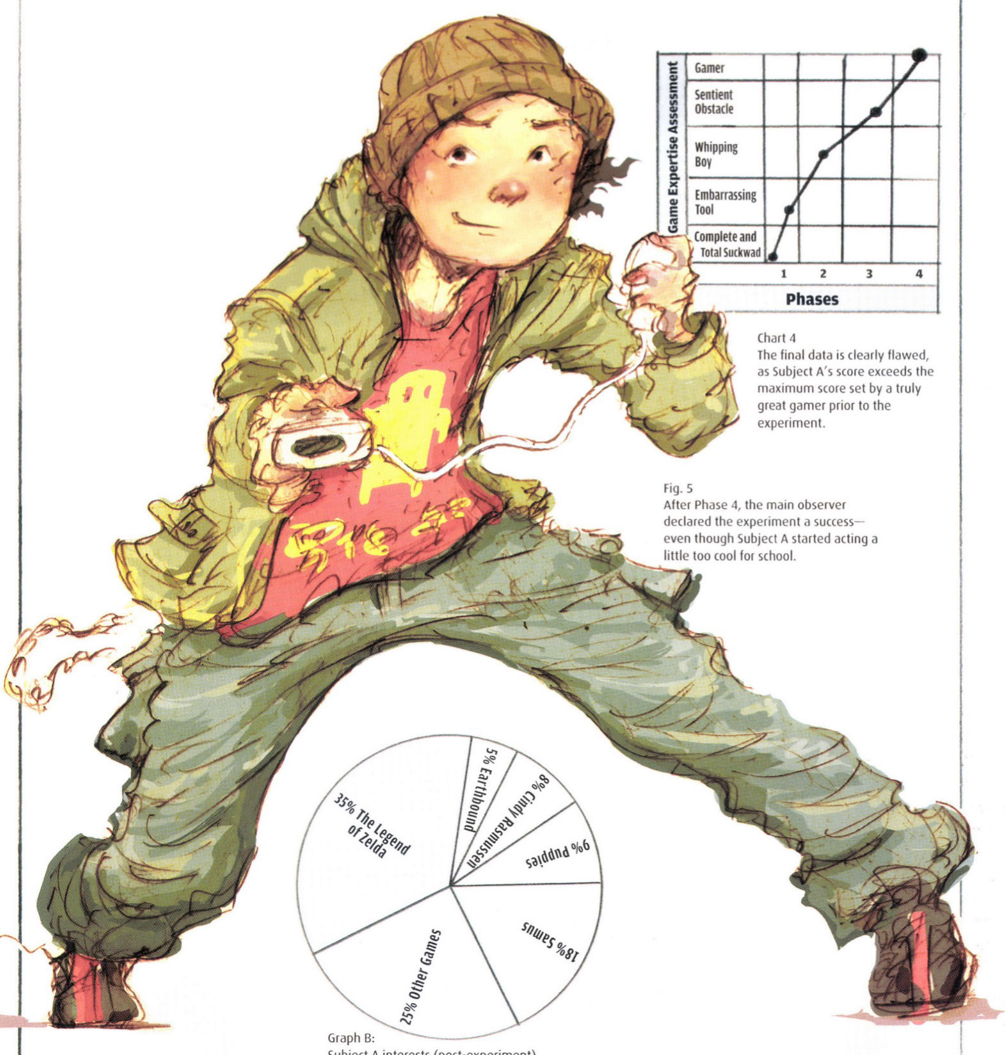

Game Expertise Assessment
Gamer
Sentient Obstacle
Whipping Boy
Embarrassing Tool
Complete and Total Suckwad
1
2
3
4
Phases
35% The Legend of Zelda
5% Earthbound
8% Cindy Rasmussen
9% Puppies
18% Samus
25% Other Games

Chart 4
The final data is clearly flawed, as Subject A's score exceeds the maximum score set by a truly great gamer prior to the experiment.

Fig. 5
After Phase 4, the main observer declared the experiment a success—even though Subject A started acting a little too cool for school.

Graph B:
Subject A interests (post-experiment)

Grease Monkey

Tune up your driving skills for a winning run in Diddy Kong Racing for Nintendo DS.

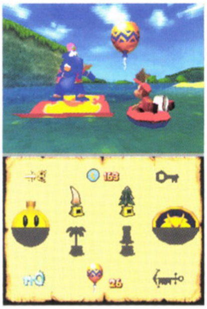
By George Sinfield

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

The Starting Line

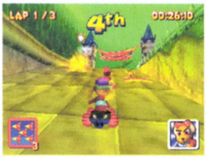
Before you hit the track you need to know a few important things—such as how to knock your opponents out of the race.

An Adventure in Ballooning



Adventure mode puts you into the middle of a battle between Wizpig and the residents of Timber's Island. With help from genie Taj, you can collect 47 balloons (by winning races and exploring the island), then confront Wizpig. You must meet a balloon quota before you can enter each race. After winning all of the races in a section, you can return to the tracks to attempt Balloon Pop challenges to earn more balloons. You can also get balloons for completing Taj's challenges, and find two hidden balloons outside of the racing areas. After you collect them all, you'll unlock Adventure 2, in which the tracks are mirror images of the originals.

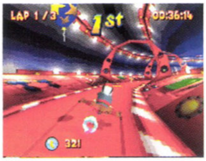
Pop and Power Up



There are power-ups of five varieties, each represented by a different balloon color. You can increase a power-up's strength by collecting multiple balloons of the same color. Grab one red balloon to earn a standard missile, two for five missiles, and three for a homing missile.

Racing Triple Threat

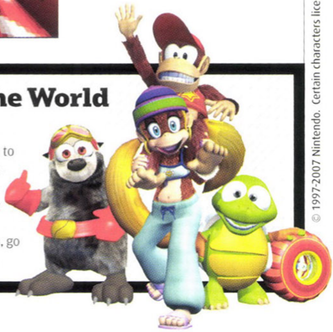
You'll have to master three types of vehicles to come out ahead. When driving the car, use brakes and gas simultaneously to drift around corners, and avoid water. When piloting the hovercraft, turn early to keep from floating off course and use the brakes on tight turns. The plane doesn't turn as sharply as the other vehicles, but it does allow you to go over water and rough terrain. Hit speed-enhancing zippers with all vehicles and lay off the gas as you zip.



You'll scoop up coins on every course. Use them in Taj's tent to upgrade your vehicles. You'll need the extra tuning to keep up with the pack in advanced races.

Take On The World

Diddy Kong Racing uses Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection to let you race against others around the globe. Join a field of up to eight to show off your skills. For info on Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection, go to www.nintendowifi.com.



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And They're Off!

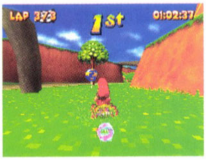
You'll find five racing regions (detailed on the following pages), each packed with tracks. The more races you win, the more you'll be able to enter.

Dino Domain

Go straight up the ramp southwest of Taj's tent and open a door that requires one balloon for entry. Your first racing challenges await.

ANCIENT LAKE

Use the zipper at the beginning of the backstretch then veer right, over the grassy shortcut. Collect the blue balloon to sustain your boost.

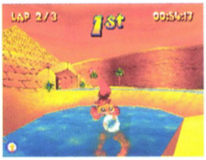


ANCIENT LAKE KEY

After you pass the first set of balloons, look for a stone structure to the right. Race through the archway and boost off the ramp to collect the first of four hidden keys. You'll need the keys to enter the final race and unlock TT's challenge, in which you will race to unlock the speedy timepiece.

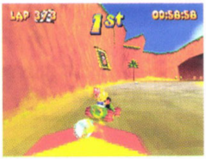
FOSSIL CANYON

You'll see a zipper to the left in the dirt going into the second big curve. Run over it to soar over the water and into the tunnel.



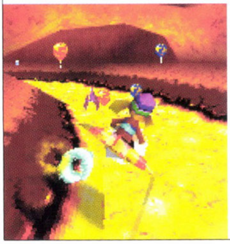
JUNGLE FALLS

Two zippers that are slightly off the beaten path will help you speed to the finish. Look for the first one on the left side of the track after the start, and for the other one in the dino skull near the end.



HOT TOP VOLCANO

Fly left of the rock formation near the start to collect a blue speed-boosting balloon. Fly to the right side of the tunnel to collect another one. You'll find a zipper and more blue balloons on the backstretch. Use the blue balloons individually for short bursts of speed, or accumulate up to three for a much bigger boost.



BOSS RACE

Tricky

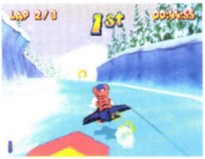
The first boss race is a rumble versus triceratops Tricky. The course spirals up a hill. Race along the inside of the continuing curve and collect a line of blue balloons. Use the balloons to stay ahead of your competition with speed boosts.

Snowflake Mountain

Talk to Taj to receive a vehicle change. You'll need the airplane and at least two balloons to get to and through the door to the northwest of Taj's tent.

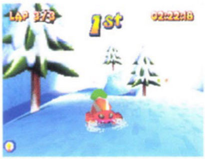
EVERFROST PEAK

Fly low to take advantage of the zippers on the ground, and soar through the zipper rings in the air. Release the gas as you zip to accentuate the boost.



WALRUS COVE

You'll come to a fork as you approach the finish line (past the S-curves and over a few gaps). Veer left at the fork to a narrow shortcut with a zipper.

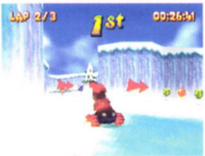


SNOWBALL VALLEY KEY

Turn sharply to the left immediately after the start of the race. You'll drive into a small alcove that holds an icy key.

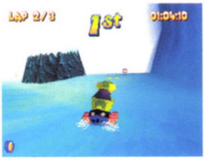
SNOWBALL VALLEY

Race straight past the large arrow that points to the right immediately after the start. You'll reach another right-pointing arrow that leads to a smoother path and blue balloons.



FROSTY VILLAGE

After you exit the winding tunnel on the backstretch, turn hard to the right using an R-Button-triggered power slide to find a line of three zippers that lead through the right-side village. The path is more difficult to follow than the center route, but much shorter.

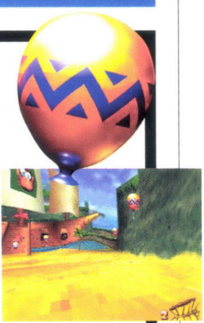


BOSS RACE

Bluey

The race against Bluey is the first significant hovercraft challenge. Staying centered will help keep you from getting hung up on the course's jagged edges. Turn early and apply your brakes on sharp curves to stay in the middle of the path.

Pivot and Pop in Balloon Challenges



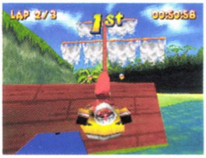
Your racing victories will earn you re-entry to the courses for Balloon Pop challenges on Taj's flying carpet. The carpet runs on a rail, but you have control over the camera (via stylus swipes). The challenge is to pop balloons with your stylus as you ride. You can also slide coins into a change purse. If you're going for a gold medal, concentrate on popping balloons and rotate as you go to get a view of balloons that had been obscurred by obstacles.

Sherbet Island

Sherbet Island is just north of the lighthouse. Get there by following paths north or east of Taj's tent. You can enter the island's main door once you have at least 10 balloons.

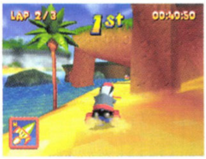
WHALE BAY

Rather than steering around the giant pirate ship on the backstretch, save time by riding over it. Use the whale as a ramp up to the deck, but don't go into the tunnel. Drive off the deck instead and rejoin the main path on the ship's far side.



CRESCENT ISLAND

The path branches immediately after the start. Go left to both avoid rough terrain and take advantage of two zippers. As you advance, you'll reach two places where power slides come in handy: on the ship's deck and around the final turn.

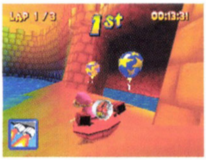


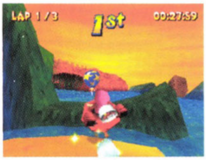
CRESCENT ISLAND KEY

There's a pool of water on the left side of the course's big sweeping right turn. Drive into the pool to find the anchor-shaped key.

PIRATE LAGOON

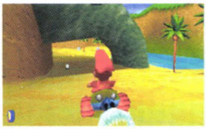
You'll enter a tight tunnel after you skitter through the course's wide-open area. Hop and turn left as you enter the tunnel to keep from hitting the wall. When you reach the reef at the end, either drive around it or take a chance by hitting the zipper then the ramp to fly over the rocks. If you're successful, you could shave precious seconds of your course time.





TREASURE CAVES

Talk to Taj to get a speed boost for your car before you head for the Treasure Caves course. While you're racing, grab the first blue balloon to gain a boost over the gap and through the stone archway.



BOSS RACE

Bubbler

If Bubbler gets ahead of you during your three-lap race, the surly red octopus will make your life miserable by dropping mines in your path. Stay on the inside part of the track and collect the red balloons that are not out of your way. You'll likely have a homing missile (three red balloons) by the time Bubbler makes his move. Use it to slow him down.

Dragon Forest

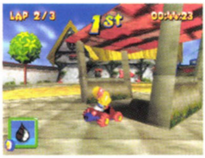
There are two waterfalls directly south of Taj's tent. Drive through the waterfall on the left, then through a 16-balloon door to enter Dragon Forest.

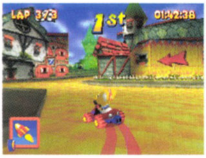
WINDMILL PLAINS

Even though you can fly high over the Windmill Plains, you'll benefit from flying low over grounded zippers—especially the ones under the windmills.

GREENWOOD VILLAGE

As you enter the village, approach the wishing well from the left, then turn into it to discover a shortcut. When you reach the last 90-degree turn, power-slide to the left (by pressing the R Button) and hit the zipper on the left side.





BOULDER CANYON

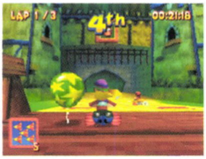
On your way through the castle on the backstretch, veer left to hit a zipper and speed to the last set of turns.

HAUNTED WOODS

Stay close to the edge of the fountain as you race through town. Stay on the inside as you wind left through the forest. Line up with the green balloon on the bridge to hit a zipper.

BOULDER CANYON KEY

On the drawbridge's left side, look for a bell on a chain . Slam into it, then turn around and boost your way up a ramp to discover the key on a high ledge.



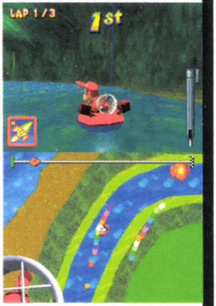
BOSS RACE

Smokey

An airplane speed upgrade is a must for your race against dragon Smokey. Fly steady through the middle of the tunnels, then cut the corner in open areas and favor speed boosts over missiles.

Paint a Road to Victory

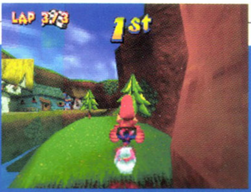
After two races against a given boss, you'll be able to enter a touch challenge for a 100-coin purse. The object in the overhead-view race is to paint a path for your racer. Try an inside path to conserve ink. When you're racing against Bluey, break the obstacles in your path by tapping them with your stylus. The battles versus Tricky and Bubbler are similar to each other, but you'll rely more on collecting balloons for the Tricky challenge. You'll use a stylus-driven steering wheel in your airplane race against Smokey. Use short swipes to direct the plane through the course.



BOSS RACE

Wizpig's first challenge

After you've proven your racing abilities by defeating Tricky, Bluey, Bubbler, and Smokey, the giant statue of Wizpig's head will open, giving you access to a race versus the alien hog. The key to winning is to make the most out of every zipper. Avoid the water as much as you can and keep boosting.



There's water in the middle of the path after the tunnel. Veer left or right to keep from slowing down in the lake, then line up for the next zipper.

Future Fun Land

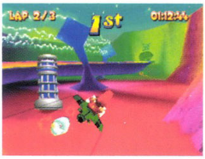
You may feel like celebrating after you've outrun Wizpig, but there's still more racing to be done! Once you've earned trophies in the four trophy races on Timber's island, visit the sign on the beach to open a warp to Wizpig's planet and Future Fun Land.

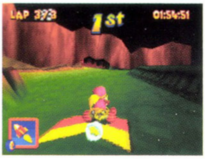
SPACEDUST ALLEY

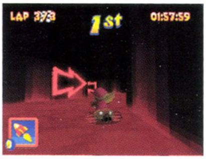
You'll enter a tunnel after you pass the spaceship in the backstretch. Exit, turn right, and stay low to fly into a zipper below the bridge.

DARKMOON CAVERNS

After emerging from the second tunnel, grab a blue balloon and swerve to the right between the craters to engage with a zipper next to the second crater. An S-curve follows. Plot a straight line through the curve to save time and keep from hitting the walls.





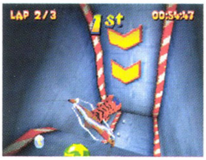


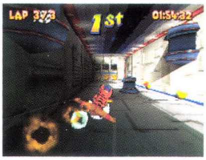
SPACEPORT APLHA

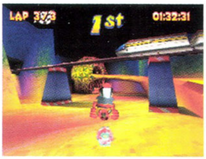
The spaceport paths are narrow and full of curves. It pays to upgrade your plane's handling stats before you take on the course. When you reach the U-shaped shaft, brake as you drop; when you reach the bottom, pull up and accelerate. Your run through trenches in the backstretch will be great for picking up blue balloons and boosting through zippers.

STAR CITY

Use a zipper to blast off the track in the monorail tunnel. You'll land in a lower shortcut tunnel. When you're in the city, use your brakes to cut the sharp corners.



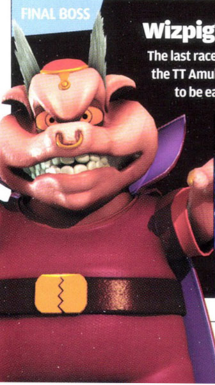


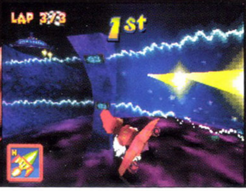


FINAL BOSS

Wizpig's final challenge

The last race against Wizpig comes after you've collected all 47 balloons and four pieces of the TT Amulet. Go through the TT door to begin your rematch with the swine. It's not going to be easy, so any plane upgrades you can afford will be well worth the investment.

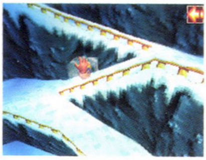




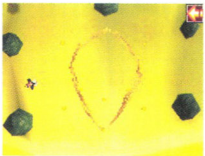
The trickiest part of the course is Wizpig's throne room, where spaceships fire lasers. Use blue-balloon boosts to get through the room as quickly as possible, and avoid the lasers at all cost.

Island Extras

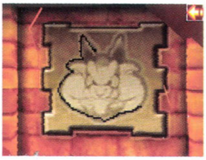
In addition to races, the game offers a driving adventure across the island. Though you'll earn 40 of 47 balloons by completing races, five balloons are yours after you succeed in periodic Taj challenges. Another pair of balloons can be yours after exploring the island. You'll also unlock hidden character Drumstick.



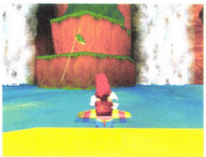
Look for a frozen balloon near the Snowflake Mountain entrance. Use your stylus to push the block down the path and break the ice.



You'll find a circle of rocks on a beach north of Sherbet island. By drawing a balloon in the sand there (as shown on the rock wall), you'll earn a balloon. By drawing a coin, you'll earn a collection of coins.

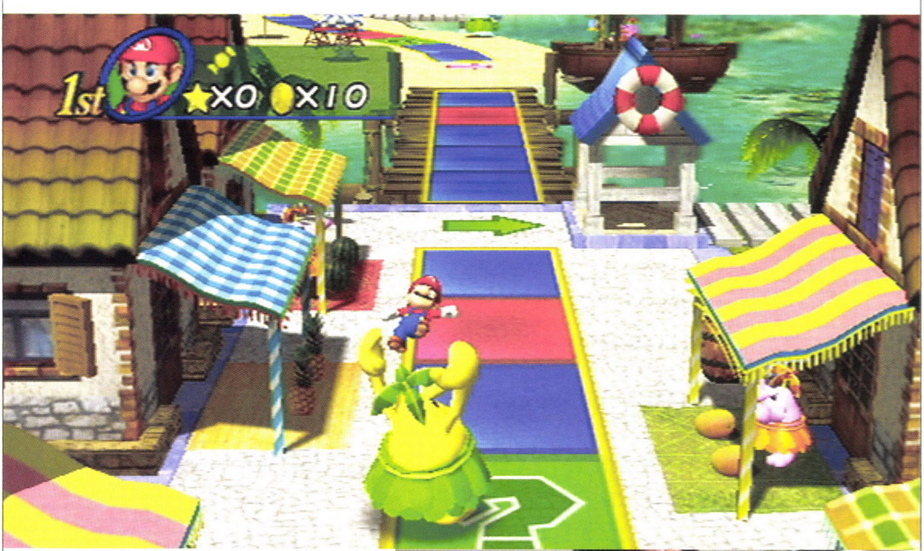


Trace Wizpig's face on the sign in the tunnel on the north end of the island to access a scratch ticket. Scratch it for cash.



After you fling a frog up to the frog-shaped marker, the frog will have a rooster's comb. Run over the frog to unlock Drumstick as a playable character.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



Making his Wii debut with **Mario Party 8**, Nintendo's party animal brings the whole crew together for a motion-controlled blowout.

By George Sinfield

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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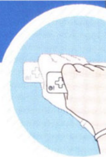
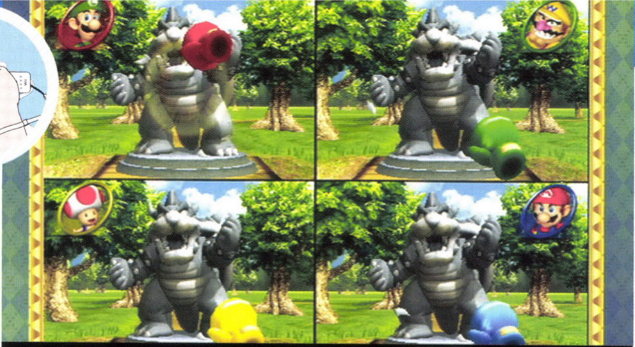
Star power and Wii control are cause for celebration! Woo-hoo!

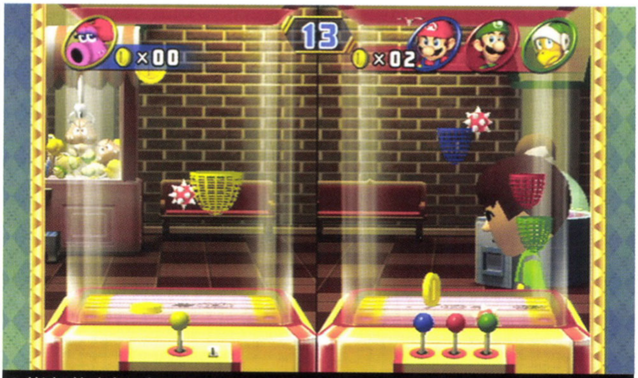


On a Roll

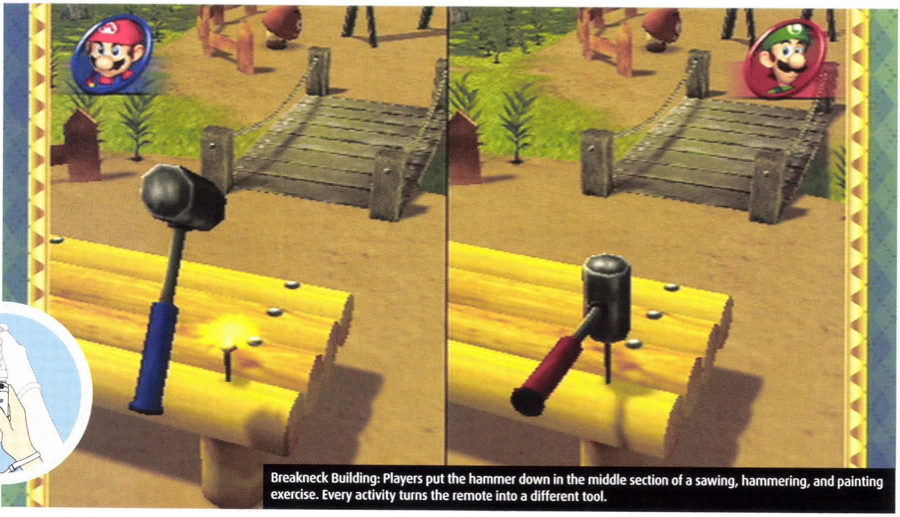
First there was Wii Sports, next WarioWare: Smooth Moves. On March 5th, Mario Party 8 joins the family of Nintendo-published Wii titles designed to bring in a crowd. The list of invitees is bigger than ever (14 characters from across the Mario universe); the six game boards are primed for partying, each with their own surprises and unique characteristics; and more than 70 all-new minigames showcase the Wii remote's capabilities. There's Shake it Up (which has four participants agitating their remotes as if they were soda cans about to erupt), Surf's Way Up (a space race on motion-controlled rocket boards), and Breakneck Building (in which the remote becomes a saw, a hammer, and a paint-brush). The games have you turning and twisting your remote, using it to point at targets and holding it with both hands—NES style—for a little old-fashioned button pushing. An introduction to each game explains how you'll use the remote, then an optional practice session lets you get geared up before you play for real. Practice is useful because the stakes are high—the outcome often meaning the difference between a Star Get! and losing all your coins. Even if you make the right moves, though, your fate can come down to a roll of the dice. It starts with a flick of your wrist. Your partyer jumps to smash the dice block, then you're off to the races. Will you score candy and prizes or watch your character be smashed by rolling barrels? Either way, you know it'll be a rollicking good time.

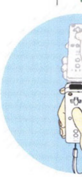


Punch-a-Bunch: Four players take swings at Bowser statues. The player who causes the most damage claims victory.



Grabbin' Gold: It's three players versus one as participants tilt their remotes to slide baskets and collect gold coins.

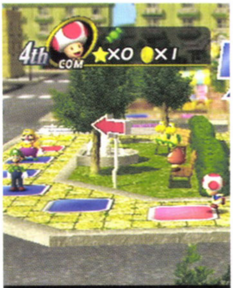




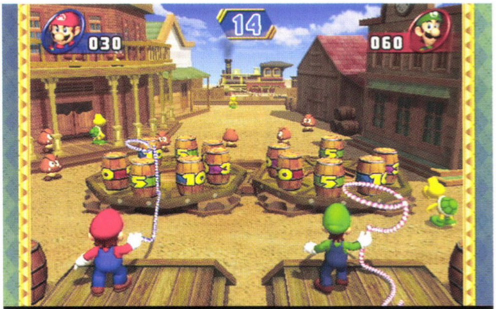
Breakneck Building: Players put the hammer down in the middle section of a sawing, hammering, and painting exercise. Every activity turns the remote into a different tool.

Party Hearty

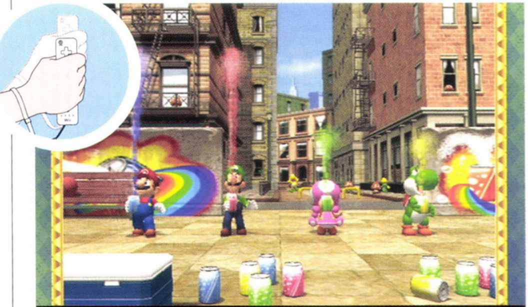
The festivities take place at the Star Carnival with MC Ballyhoo and his animated head wear Big Top presiding. A party of four can jump into a Party Tent battle on any of the first five game boards from the start (Bowser's board is unlockable). Rules vary, but the main goals are always the same: skip across the board, collect coins and trade them in for stars. Candy powerups, help or hindrance from board-game characters, and the results of minigame competitions figure into the results. You can enter the Star Battle for a whirlwind single-player tour of the game boards, taking on a different opponent on each board. The competition is fierce, but if you come out ahead, you'll reap major rewards. As you play through the board games, and participate in minigames, you'll unlock new titles for the Free Play Arcade. The diversions are sorted by player configurations, from two-on-two team challenges to an every-player-for-himself battle royale. The Extras Zone is another carnival hotspot, where your choice of characters jumps into games that range from popular pastimes, such as bowling or ping pong to addictive puzzler Trial by Tile and two-player racer Canyon Cruisers, which recalls Luke Skywalker's Landspeeder runs on Tatooine. Some of the Extras Zone games, and many other unlockables, can be yours when you trade in Carnival Cards at the Fun Bazaar. The more you play, the more ways you can party.



Party goers fight for position on the game board, usually racing for stars.



Blazing Lassos: Know any rope tricks? Mario Party 8 lets you lasso barrels with a simple spinning and tossing motion.



Shake It Up: The can-shaking minigame is an experiment in aggitated carbination. The tallest soda geyser wins.

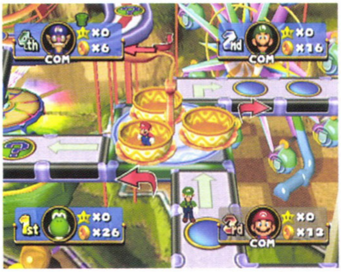
TREKKIE TREAT

Party Favors

Mario Party games always pull out the stops for an unmatched multiplayer experience, but just like Star Trek movies, the even-numbered ones seem to outshine the others (which bodes well for Mario Party 8). Here are our even-numbered highlights:

Mario Party 2: Still the most popular game in the series, Mario Party 2 added the robust single-player Quest mode to the mix. After that, single-player modes became a series mainstay.

Mario Party 4: The first Mario Party game for the Nintendo GameCube stepped up with 3-D game boards and an innovative mini-giant system which made the characters change in size, giving them access to new sections of the game boards.



Mario Party 6: The GCN microphone gave players a new way to play Mario Party minigames starting with Mario Party 6. The game offered a day-night system that changed the nature of the minigames based on the time of day within the game.

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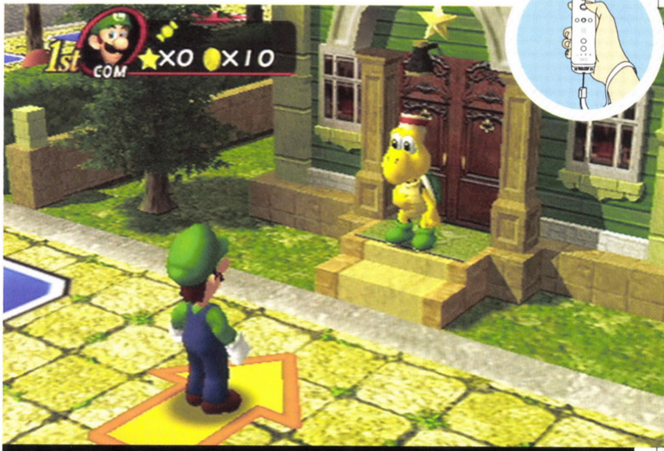
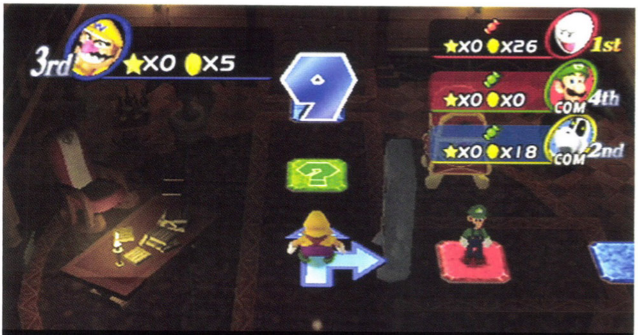
All Aboard

Every game board brings something new to the party. DK's Treetop Temple path winds up and down the branches of a huge jungle growth. If your dice roll lands you next to DK's barrel cannon, he'll send you sky high, often within grasp of a Star. The first player to collect two Stars wins. Star collection is the name of the game in King Boo's Haunted Hideaway, too, but you don't have advance knowledge of where the Stars are, and the place is loaded with dead ends. Koopa's Tycoon Town puts Mario Party characters in the real-estate business. The tycoons-in-training use their coins to invest in hotels. The character with the most coins in any given property has a controlling interest in the hotel and ownership of its stars. Strategy plays a big part, as does the luck of the draw when Koopa rolls up in his car to give you a ride to an out-of-the-way hotel. Other boards offer rule variations that require you to collect a set number of coins, then race to the end. Everything comes to a head in Bowser's Warped Vortex where stealing Stars from other players is commonplace.



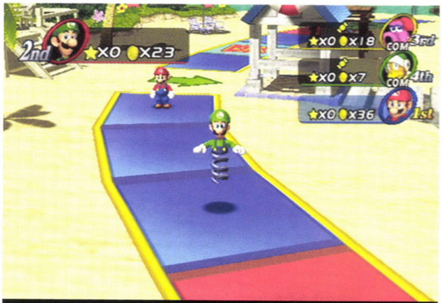
On the Koopa's Tycoon Town board, the object is to out-invest your opponents in hotels. If you put a lot of money into a place, you'll make it a four-star establishment.



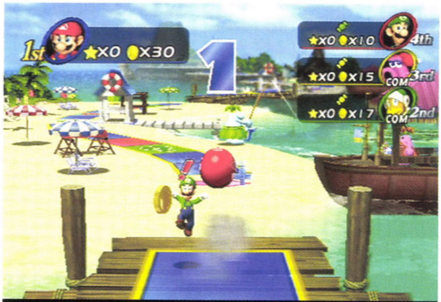
King Boo's Haunted Hideaway is a ghost hunt. The player who tracks down King Boo twice gets the win.

I Want Candy

Though there's no denying the benefits of a good dice roll, you can also give yourself an advantage by making strategic use of Candy powerups. You can buy candy at game-board locations and eat one piece per turn. Springo candy puts you in the location of another player of your choice. You can use it to hop into the lead and claim the Star that was in that player's grasp. Bitsize candy turns your character into an 8-bit version of himself and places coin blocks on every space that you skip to. Two types of candy give you more dice to roll and several others morph your character into a creature capable of stomping, stealing from, or carrying away the characters that are in your path. Mario Party 8 is sure to carry away your video gaming party when it sets down on Wii in March.



Springo Candy lets you spring to the location of another player on the board. It's particularly effective in two-player games.



Bowlo Candy flattens all opponents in your way, and transfers some of their cash to your coffers.

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Lootin' & Tootin'

EVERYONE 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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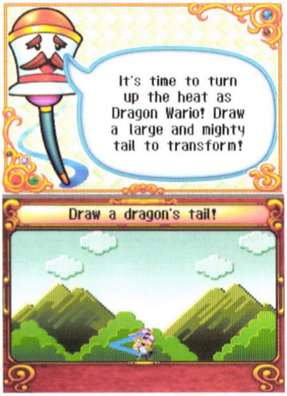
Wario has been plying his trade as a purveyor of food- and potty-themed minigames for so long, it's easy to forget that he made a name for himself as a platforming anti-hero. Wario: Master of Disguise for DS combines the two genres into a delightful mélange of fart jokes and stylus-twiddling. By Drew Williams

Master of Disguise may grab the record for fart

Wario has always been a paradoxical character. His desire for easy money usually leads him into adventures that result in temporary dementia, asphyxia, horrible burns, and zombification. He would have been better off getting a job at the Gap, because there's nothing easy about zombification.

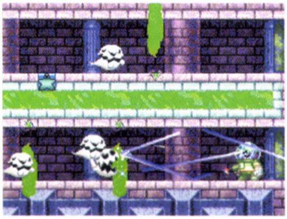
In Wario: Master of Disguise, the purple-and-yellow crook manages to break the cycle of pain by combining his two favorite things: five-finger discounts and parking his prodigious butt on the sofa. One afternoon, while lamenting his failure as a treasure hunter, Wario happens upon a TV show that changes his life: "The Silver Zephyr." The title character is a top-hatted master thief who uses a sentient magic wand to create disguises for himself. Jealous to the point of inspiration, Wario creates a time-saving device called a Telmet to bend time, space, and reality so he can enter the TV show and soak up the riches. Before you can touch that dial, Wario is on the show, in possession of the wand, and well on his way to zillionare status. Wario soon assumes the identity of The Purple Wind and finds out about the big score that the Silver Zephyr had planned: a magical object known as the Wishstone. We won't get into the details of how the Wishstone works, but suffice it to say Wario will not need to worry about money if he manages to find it.



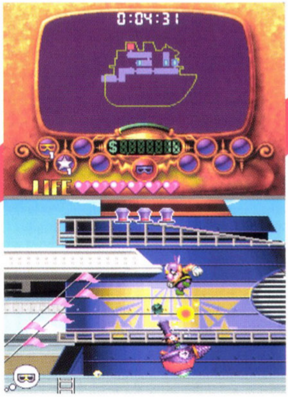
It's time to turn up the heat as Dragon Wario! Draw a large and mighty tail to transform!

Draw a dragon's tail!

Each time you win a disguise, Goodstyle will walk you through a comprehensive tutorial on its use.

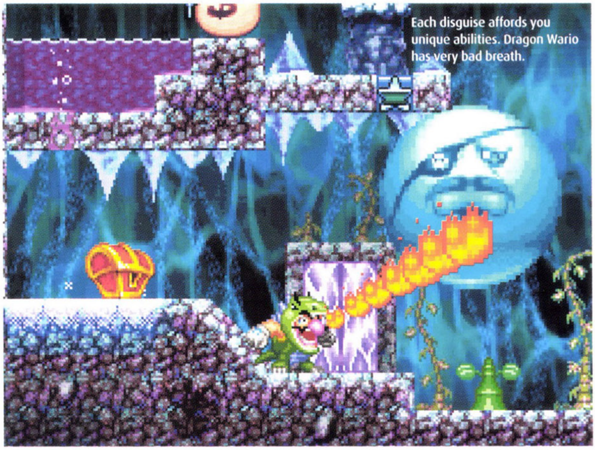


Some specific abilities—like Cosmic Wario's laser—will upgrade as you collect more loot.



Leave the gun—you can take the Cannoli without it.

If you think it all sounds like yet another nonsensical setup for a handheld platformer, you're right. But you'd be wrong if you made the next logical leap—that this game must be just like Warioland outings—because Master of Disguise offers a pile of minigame challenges, character abilities and DS touch-screen functionality. Goodstyle, the talking wand, is central to the action—the jewels you hunt down in the various episodes of the adventure enhance Goodstyle's disguise-generating abilities (either by adding a new disguise or an upgrade to an existing disguise) so you can access new areas. When you wear Genius Wario's special goggles, for example, you can see hidden openings that are otherwise inaccessible. Many obstacles will require you to switch disguises multiple times to reach a goal—a gameplay mechanic that would quickly become tedious if not for easy touch-screen controls. To change into, say, Cosmic Wario, all you need to do is draw a simple helmet around Wario's head. To revert to Thief Wario—the core character with the best overall platforming abilities—you just draw a check mark next to the character. The drawings are simple enough that you can keep all eight of them in your head at once during the adventure, but unusual enough that you won't accidentally trigger a costume change when you're trying to fire a laser. The stylus does a lot of the work in the game—so much of the work, in fact, that you may want to lay the DS on a flat surface so you can move and jump with the



Each disguise affords you unique abilities. Dragon Wario has very bad breath.

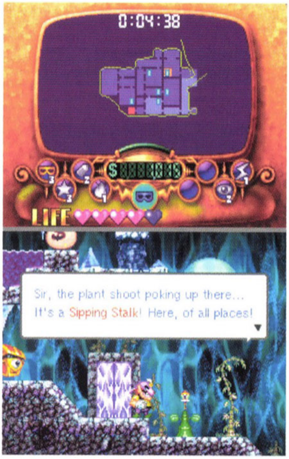
references in a game featuring a talking wand.

control pad while unleashing special attacks on the touch screen. (If you're a lefty, you can use the A, X, and Y Buttons to navigate.)

The typical level, or "episode," begins with a lengthy exchange of unpleasantries between Wario and Count Cannoli, the defrocked Silver Zephyr, before you move on to some basic platforming. As you solve the mildly challenging environmental puzzles to progress through the level, you'll run across treasure chests that contain minigames. Although the minigames may lack the lightning-fast intensity and variety of the ones found in WarioWare, they make up for those shortcomings with their complexity and difficulty. The games feature recurring tasks—like coloring pictures to match an example, smashing cockroaches, or connecting numbered dots to draw a picture—that become progressively difficult as you advance in the game. If you beat a minigame, you are usually awarded with some sort of treasure that has an arbitrary dollar amount attached to it (your total take is tallied in a ledger at the end of each episode). It's worth investigating every chest, because some of them contain the Guise Gems that give you new abilities or maps that show you unexplored areas on the top screen of the DS. It's also worth it to defeat as many enemies as possible—most yield small gems that will eventually allow Goodstyle to level-up your disguises to give you new abilities—like a laser that bounces off of walls or breath that destroys a greater variety of blocks.

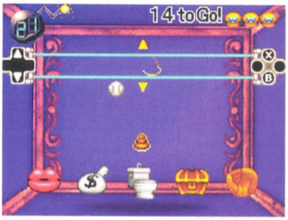
If you can make it through the level with life hearts to spare, you'll reach a boss chamber that contains a piece of the Wishstone—and a Doctor Robotnik-like boss controlled by Count Connoli. In the boss battles, you'll need to switch disguises at various points to expose Cannoli so you can stomp him to end the fight. By the time you get to the game's final episode, you'll have plenty of garment-powered abilities at your disposal, so some of the fights may induce multiple-personality disorder. (Check out the following page to find out what your supernatural tailor/wand has in store for you.)

So there you go—we've cased the joint for you. All that's left is to do the crime. First, however, you'll need to do the time: Master of Disguise doesn't come out until March.

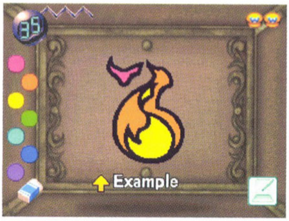


Sir, the plant shoot poking up there...
It's a Sipping Stalk! Here, of all places!

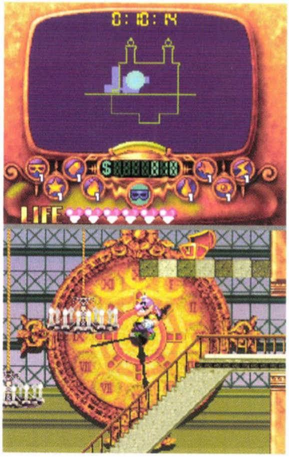
Thanks to Goodstyle's verbose explanations of the level design, you'll rarely get stuck.



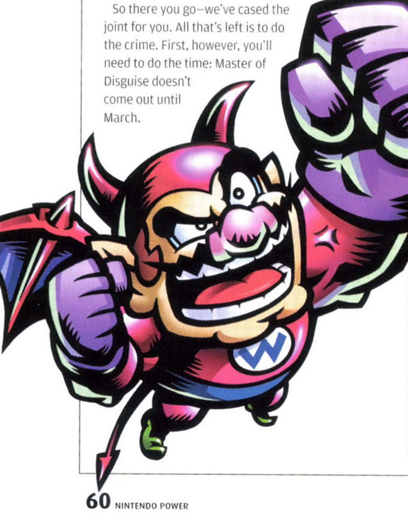
Please don't put the poop in the pretty mouth. You'll play minigames for prizes and disguises.

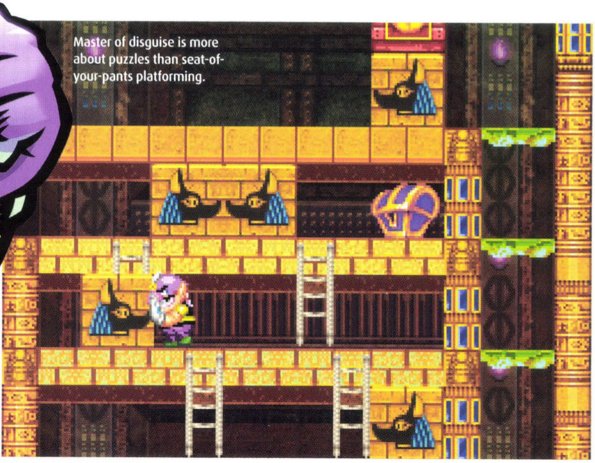


This minigame is totally paint-by-numbers. Without the numbers.



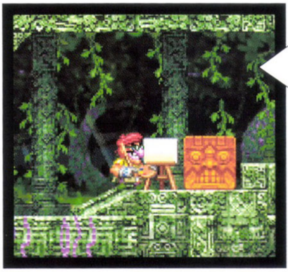
Thief Wario is the baseline disguise. Wario is most mobile when he dons the purple mask.





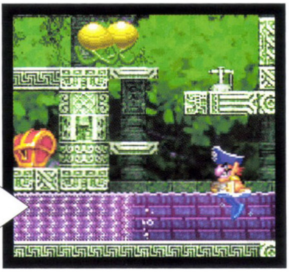
Master of disguise is more about puzzles than seat-of-your-pants platforming.

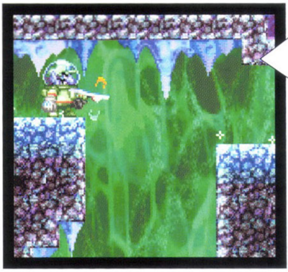
The suit makes the man . . . flatulent.



As **Arty Wario**, you can create blocks that help you access platforms, and warp doors that take you back to your last save point—simply by drawing them on the touch screen. Here's the rub: Wario can't move when he's in this disguise. Wario requires total concentration.

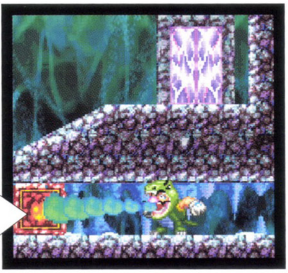
Captain Wario is a salty seaman who rides the high seas in his trusty inner tube. You can row, row, row your butt across the water by repeatedly dragging the stylus in the opposite direction from where you want to travel. The disguise also allows you to dive underwater in a submarine.

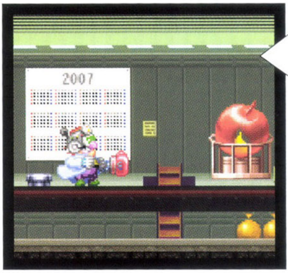




Ground control to **Cosmic Wario**. Don a space suit and start blasting stuff—enemies, chandeliers, etc.—with your laser pistol. The upgraded disguise features laser beams that bounce!

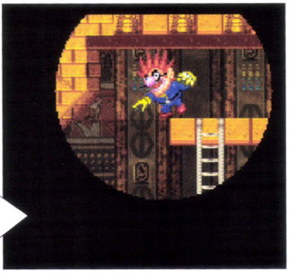
Dragon Wario is a lead-footed thunder lizard who falls off of small platforms. On the plus side: his fire breath and toxic belches can blast away colored blocks.

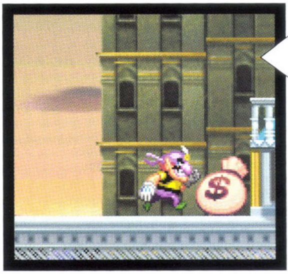




Genius Wario is a mopey sort who shuffles along at a slow pace and takes in the sights—with his electronic all-seeing goggles. Call upon four-eyes to access openings and blocks that Wario can't see in other guises.

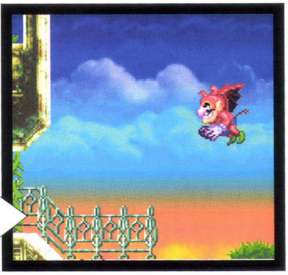
Sparky Wario really lights up a room when he walks into it. He can also electrocute people in the room if you hold the stylus to the touch screen.





Thief Wario—aka The Purple Wind—is the most boring disguise, and also the most practical. It allows him to run faster and jump higher than any other disguise. Unfortunately, the guise cannot be upgraded.

Wicked Wario is arguably the coolest disguise in Goodstyle's tool box. It allows Wario to fly when you blow in the DS microphone. You can stay in the air until you run out of breath.



Motion Blur

Speed, style, and a crazy new control scheme make **SSX Blur** for Wii a snowboarding spectacle like you've never seen.

By Andy Myers

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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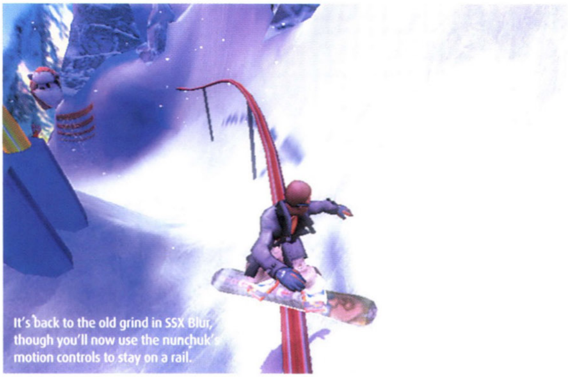
Only one game has the potential of keeping snowboarders entertained during this year's off-season. SSX Blur—the upcoming installment in the most popular snowboarding franchise around—aims to redefine snowboard control by way of the Wii remote and nunchuk. And it's doing so in a way that has everybody, including us, surprised. Read on for our hands-on impressions of Wii's first extreme-sports title.

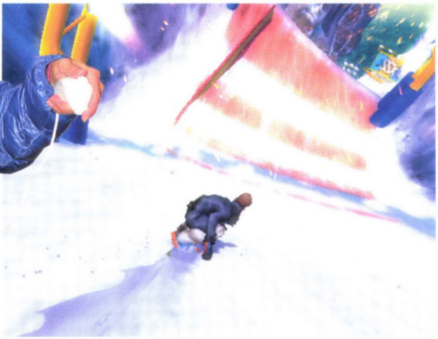
Now You're Playing With Powder

At first glance, SSX Blur looks to be simply a "best of" compilation for the franchise, featuring characters and courses from previous SSX games. But once you get the controller in your hands and try it out for yourself, you'll realize how much of a departure it is from the rest of the series. EA Montreal has taken classic SSX control—renowned for its speed and precision—and mapped it to the Wii remote and nunchuk in a wholly unique way. The system (which EA is calling "on-the-ground and in-the-air") assigns the nunchuk to all your ground movement, freeing up the Wii remote to tackle the in-air tricks. Rather than relying on the analog stick for basic movement, you'll actually tilt the nunchuk left and right to steer your snowboard, tipping it forward to speed up and pulling it backward to slow down. The analog stick serves as an extra nudge in any direction, giving you an additional layer of control while you're carving down a slope. Pressing the Z Button on the nunchuk will give your board a boost, and when you hit a ramp, you'll simply flick the nunchuk upward to jump. The faster you approach the ramp and the better your jump timing, the more air you'll get. "We tried many different variations of the controls," explains Alex Hyder, the game's producer. "Some worked out great and others just felt wrong . . . As soon as we played one run with the controls the way they are, we knew we had it. It just feels so natural and it's so much fun."

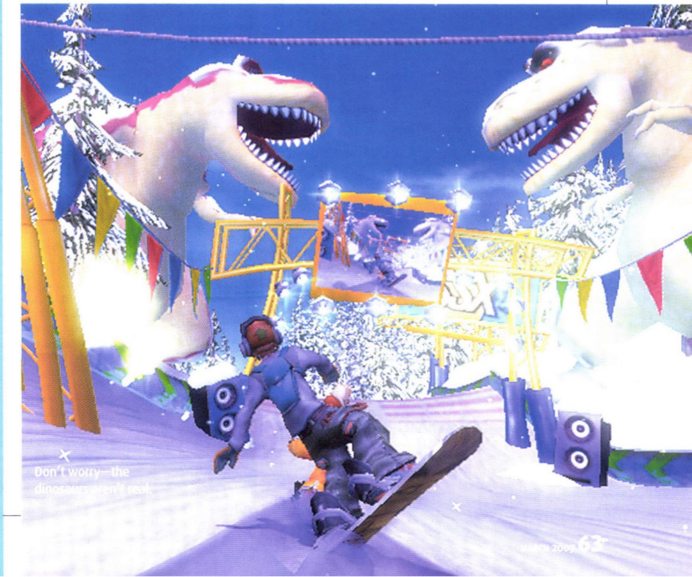
Though we were shown an early version of SSX Blur, we agreed with Hyder—controlling your boarder's basic movements is responsive, intuitive, and a whole lot of fun. In fact, it's hard to go back to an older SSX game after playing Blur for just a few minutes. It's one of the smoothest rides we've seen on Wii.



It's back to the old grind in SSX Blur, though you'll now use the nunchuk's motion controls to stay on a rail.



Buttons are so 2005. You won't need to hit a single one to get airborne in Blur.



Don't worry—the dinosaurs aren't real.

Airborne Antics

Everything in SSX Blur changes once you're in the air, at which point the main controls switch to the Wii remote. Spin tricks are performed by tilting the remote left and right, while backward and forward pitches of the remote will execute flips. The nunchuk is not completely disregarded—it now represents your grabs. Hold the C Button to perform a grab, and tilt the nunchuk in any direction to tweak it.

If the control scheme sounds a little whacky, that's because it is—especially once you start learning Uber Tricks; at that point your composure goes completely out the window. You can start busting Ubers as soon as you've performed enough lesser tricks to fill up what's being called the "Groove Meter" this time around. With your Groove Meter full, you'll need to hold down the A Button, then draw a shape with the Wii remote and release the A Button to perform the trick (see the sidebar for a few examples). With Ubers thrown into the mix, the trick combinations are limitless. But as fans of previous SSX games know, it's easy to get greedy when stringing together combos—the real challenge is to land on your feet. To do so, you'll need to press the B Button before it's too late to reorient your character and ensure a smooth landing.

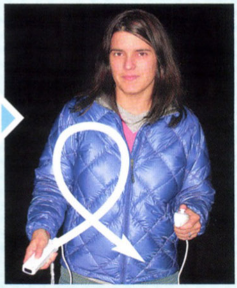
Because SSX Blur maxes out motion controls in both the remote and the nunchuk, the trick system takes some getting used to—but no more than the original SSX did back in the day. "SSX has always been about motion in some way," explains Hyder. "Whether you're ripping down the hill or pulling off insane tricks, motion has been a key element of SSX. With the Wii controls we can now take that in-game motion and transfer it to the user, allowing an even better connection with the character on the mountain." After spending some time with the trick system, you'll have a blast, even if you look slightly absurd.

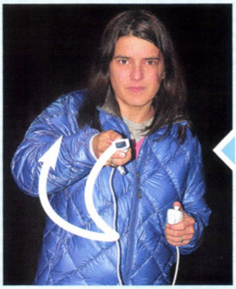
Uber Awesome

The Uber trick system's insane use of motion control is beyond compare. There are three levels of difficulty when performing Ubers, and (as you may have guessed) the more difficult the movement is, the more awesome the maneuver will be. We've spotlighted three of the game's Uber Tricks below, along with the nunchuk/remote motions required to pull them off.

Kickback Jack

Drawing this shape with the Wii remote and releasing the A Button will trigger one of the game's simpler Uber Tricks, in which the snowboarder takes one foot out of his binding and swings the board around his back.



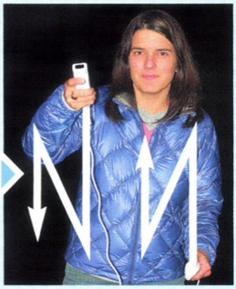


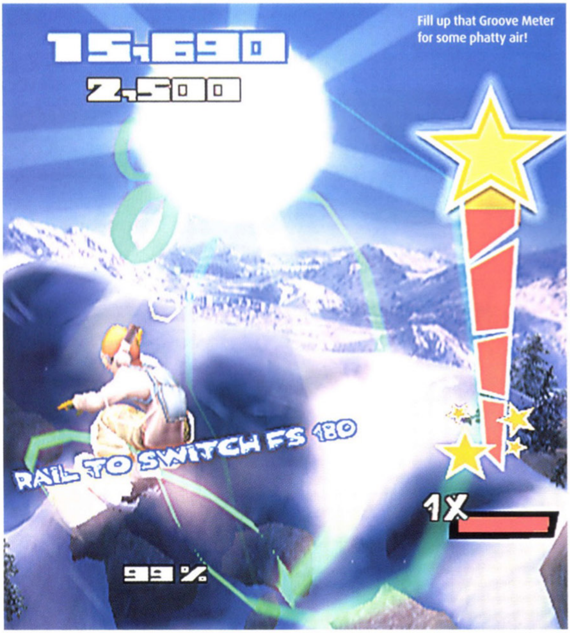
Chocolate thunder

This Uber Trick is pulled off by drawing a moon shape with the Wii remote, and will prompt your boarder to remove both feet from his board, swing the board around, then strum it like a guitar.

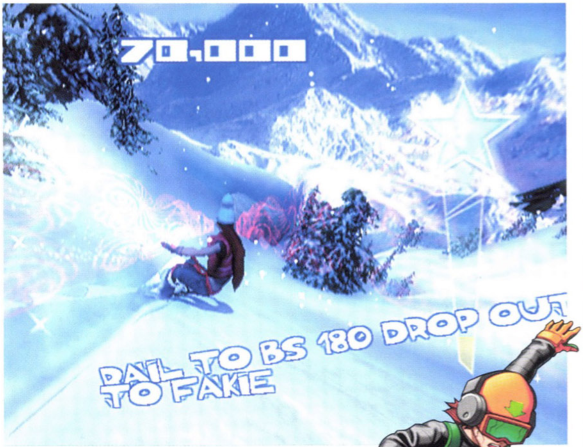
Nutcracker

Synchronized motions with both the remote and the nunchuk will set a more-difficult Uber Trick in motion, where your character leaves his snowboard completely, turns 180 degrees, kicks his heels like a leprechaun, then straps his board back on.





Fill up that Groove Meter for some phatty air!



Go that way, really fast. If something gets in your way . . . turn.

Classic Shreddin'

To usher in a new era of control, EA will look to the franchise's past for much of the game's content. You'll play as classic characters, including Mac, Moby, Allegra, and Psymon, along with two new characters—Maurice and Feather. Courses too will span the SSX spectrum. "SSX fans played a big role in helping us to decide which characters and tracks to include," states Hyder. Whether you'll be able to play as Mario, Peach, or Luigi remains to be seen. And as far as we know, there will not be any new courses—but EA promises we will see only the best of the best from the series' rich history, including at least one three-part monster run from fan-favorite title SSX 3. "A huge part of SSX is the mountain itself," exclaims Hyder. "With so many different ways down the slope, and of course, quite simply the amazing beauty and excitement of mountains." Many other elements from SSX's past will make comebacks as well, including the ability to ski as an alternative to snowboarding (introduced in SSX on Tour).

Even with familiar content, SSX Blur comes across as a new experience. In addition to a control scheme tailored to Wii, EA has given the franchise a heavy visual and musical makeover. "We wanted to be sure that SSX Blur reflects the Wii feel and style in addition to taking full advantage of the hardware," explains Hyder. EA enlisted the help of accomplished electronic musician Junkie XL for the game's soundtrack, plus bells and whistles such as new environmental effects and the ability to throw snowballs at opponents have been added. But that's all just icing on the cake. Like so many Wii games, SSX Blur is all about control. And whether you're a longtime fan or a newcomer to the series, you haven't played anything quite like SSX Blur. Will it set the standard for snowboarding games on Wii? We can't wait to hit the slopes this March to find out.

NINTENDO POWER
OFFICIAL MINIGUIDE

FINAL FANTASY VI
ADVANCE

SIXTH SENSE

One of the greatest and most challenging RPG series of all time has returned to the GBA in the form of **FINAL FANTASY VI ADVANCE**. Use the tips on the following pages to tackle the game's trickiest areas, learn its most useful secrets, and restore order to the world.

By Chris Hoffman

EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

In the Shadows of the Empire

The Gestahlian Empire is on the move, using a combination of magic and technology to crush its neighboring nations. The journey to put an end to Emperor Gestahl's Magitek-fueled ambitions is fraught with peril; fortunately, the timeline on the following pages will provide you with a framework of how to proceed through the game. Additionally, the numbers on selected entries correspond to tips that point out the highlights of the adventure: character info, boss strategies, item locations, and more. If defeating the empire still proves too tough, don't give up—if you fall in battle, you'll restart from your last save point with all your experience points intact, allowing you to face your foes with renewed strength.

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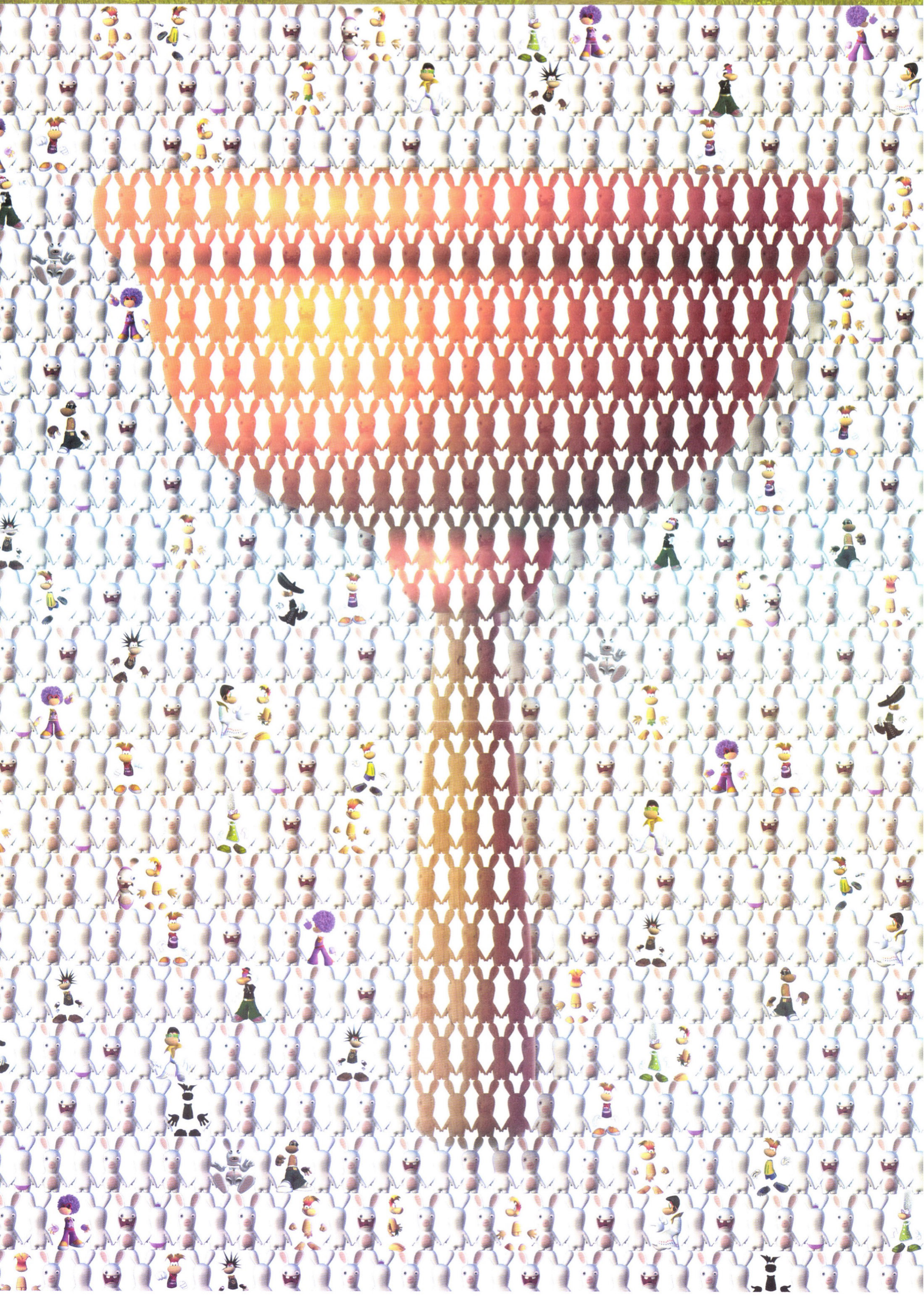
RAVING ACADEMY



NINTENDO POWER

Wii

UBISOFT

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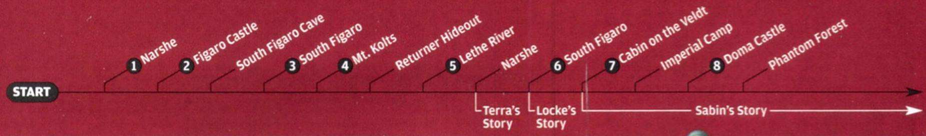
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

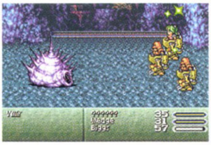
Mild Cartoon Violence

WORLD OF BALANCE



❶ March on Narshe

The Magitek armor you're equipped with at the start of the game will make short work of most enemies (including the first boss, Ymir), and it comes with healing powers. Once Terra's free from imperial control, you must flee through the mines on foot. Locke will join up with you shortly to help you escape.



Do not attack the shell during the battle with Ymir. Wait for the head to re-emerge if it retracts into the shell.

Terra

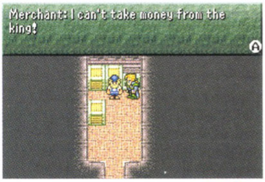
Terra Branford is the first main party member you'll encounter. She has innate magic skills and impressive magic power. Partway through the game she'll learn to transform, thus increasing her strength even further.

Locke

Self-proclaimed treasure hunter Locke Cole has a storied past. His Steal ability is a great way to get items. Equip him with the Thief's Bracer and Brigand's Glove relics to enhance his thievery.

❷ Shopping Spree

Be sure to buy the tools for King Edgar when you get to Figaro Castle. Edgar will join your crew shortly; when you return to the castle store with him in your party later in the game, you'll receive a discount on everything you purchase.



Merchant: I can't take money from the king!

Edgar

His Royal Highness Edgar Roni Figaro is a master of machines, which he uses to aid him in battle. His Tools cost nothing to use once you've bought them, and they provide a wide array of powerful offense.

❸ Rich Man's Bounty

The wealthy man living in the northwest corner of South Figaro has some very useful items hidden in his home. To find them, go to the top floor of his house and enter the hidden passage behind the left bookcase, then continue downward until you reach a narrow passage heading south. South and one step to the right of the passage, you'll find a secret stairway that leads to a Hyper Wrist and Hermes Sandals.

❹ Martial Arts Mountain

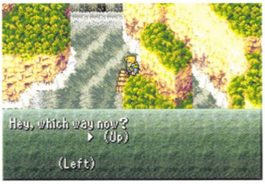
At the end of Mt. Kolts you'll encounter Vargas, a martial artist with a chip on his shoulder. Use Locke's Steal ability to swipe the Mythril Claws from Vargas early in the battle, then use Edgar's Bio Blaster to lay down the hurt. After Sabin enters the fray, use his Raging Fist Blitz (press left, right, left, A) to quickly end the fight.

Sabin

Sabin Rene Figaro is Edgar's brother, but instead of mastering machines, he's devoted himself to the martial arts. His Blitzes are activated by pressing complex button sequences, and he'll learn more moves as he levels up.

❺ Quite an Experience

Sure, you're on the run from the empire, but as you're escaping via the Lethe River, you can take some time to gain lots of extra experience points. If you repeatedly go up at the second fork, you can loop around the river over and over to gain experience while using Banon's healing skill continuously to stay alive.



Hey, which way now?
▸ (Up)
(Left)

❻ A Rogue in South Figaro

When Locke's branch of the story takes him back to South Figaro, you'll have to steal the clothes off of merchants and soldiers to get into the wealthy man's mansion. Take the hidden passage behind the bookcase to get into the basement again. After winding the clock to access the area blocked by the cabinet, hang a left in the second hidden north-south passage, then go south to find stairs leading to three treasures, including a precious Ribbon.

Celes

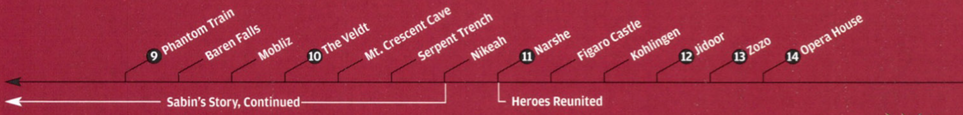
Former imperial general Celes Chere was artificially infused with magic power, allowing her to learn spells as she levels up. She can also use her Runic skill to absorb spells with her sword.

❼ Ninja for Hire

When Sabin's quest begins, he'll find himself washed up on the shore near a small cabin. Visit the cabin to meet Shadow the ninja. Ask him to join you—you'll need his help. Before you head south to the imperial camp, talk to the chocobo-mounted item merchant and buy a dozen or so shuriken to increase Shadow's arsenal.

Shadow

Shadow's an assassin for hire with excellent speed and a Throw ability that lets him hurl weapons at foes. He's accompanied by his dog, Interceptor, who will randomly attack enemies during battle.



⑧ Atrocity at Doma Castle

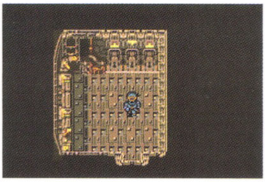
You'll take control of loyal swordsman Cyan shortly after you enter the imperial camp. Once you defeat the enemy leader with Cyan's Bushido skills, you'll witness imperial mage Kefka commit a truly heinous act—visit the throne room and the chamber to the right of it to see what Kefka's evil has wrought.

Cyan

A loyal servant to the Kingdom of Doma, Cyan Garamonde is a chivalrous swordsman. His Bushido skill utilizes a meter to execute special moves, but his standard attack can be very powerful as well.

⑨ Haunted Ride

After navigating the Phantom Forest, Sabin, Shadow, and Cyan will find themselves on the Phantom Train. First go right to find a friendly ghost who will temporarily join your party, then proceed left through the train. When you reach the engine room, flip the first and third switches then press a button on the smokestack outside to initiate a boss battle.



Attack
Throw
Items
Shadow
Sabin
Cyan
358
502
421

The Phantom Train's a pushover. One Phoenix Down will send it back to the beyond.

⑩ The Wild Child

As you're exploring the plains of the Veldt, you'll encounter Gau, a wild youth roaming with packs of beasts. Get him to join you by acquiring some dried meat in Mobliz and using it on him.

Gau

Gau's a feral youth who learns attacks by leaping into monster packs he encounters on the Veldt. Some of the best beasts to learn from are the Bomb, Guard Leader, Briareus, Anguiform, and Antares.

⑪ Three-Pronged Assault

After your three teams are reunited in Narshe, you'll have to divide your group into three units to protect the frozen esper from imperial attack. Split your forces into a main attack team of three characters (preferably including Celes, Cyan, and Sabin or Edgar) and two support teams with two characters apiece. Place your support teams at critical junctures to block enemy advances, and make your way south with your main team to take on Kefka. Heal before you face him.

Attack
Blitz
Items
Edgar
Sabin
Celes
449
325
498

Use Celes's Runic to absorb Kefka's magic, then pummel Kefka with Tools or Blitzes.

⑫ Going Once . . .

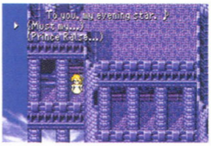
As you chase after Terra, you'll find yourself in the town of Jidoor. One of its highlights is the auction house. After you get an airship, return here and bid on the Zona Seeker and Golem magicite. They'll come in handy in your upcoming battles.

⑬ Honor Among Thieves

The town of Zozo is filled with liars and thieves, but exploring it is worth your while. Set the clock to 6:10:50 in the northeast building to open a passage that leads to the useful chainsaw tool for Edgar. Don't miss the Brigand's Glove on a balcony outside the central building; it's a great relic for Locke.

⑭ Cultured Shock

To meet up with Setzer, you're going to have to put on a good show at the opera. As long as you follow the script, you'll be in fine shape. Choose "O my hero . . ." for your first line, followed by "I'm the darkness . . ." and finally "Must my . . . ." When Draco appears, move to him and press the A Button whenever he stops moving, then grab the flowers, head up the stairs, and move to the far left balcony.



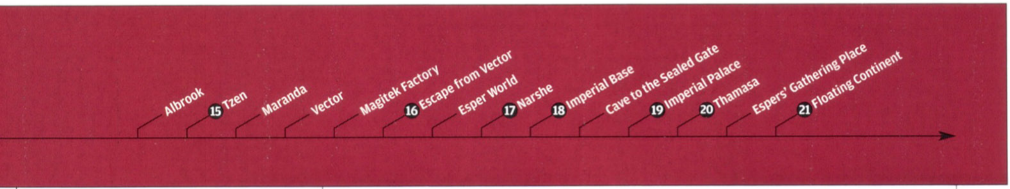
To you, my evening star. ♪
(Must my...)
(Prince Ralse...)

Don't hesitate when selecting your lines. You have only a few seconds to decide.

Setzer

Meet Setzer Gabbiani: gambler, airship owner, and all-around playboy. Keep him in the back row since his attacks are ranged. His Slot ability yields a variety of useful results, but can be harmful if you're unlucky.

Good timing is the key to using Setzer's Slot.



⑮ Magicite for Sale

After you reach the southern continent, take some time to explore. The town of Tzen is located far to the north; return to Tzen after completing your mission in Vector's Magitek Factory to find a man in the burg's northeast corner, hidden among the trees, selling the Seraph magicite. Buy it as soon as you can—its healing powers are very handy.

⑰ Moogle Power

Once you have control over the airship, return to Narshe. Enter the house on the east side; you'll come across a pickpocket. Follow him through the mines (take the first right) until you find him holding a moogle hostage. Opt to save the moogle and he'll join your party.

You can either save Mog or grab the Gold Hairpin. Be a nice guy and rescue the moogle.

Mog

Not only is Mog a moogle who talks, but he's a well-rounded character and a mean dancer. Mog can learn a new dance for each environment that he's in; master the Water Rondo in the Serpent Trench or the Lethe River.

⑱ No Time for Treasure

On your way to the Sealed Gate east of Vector, you must pass through an imperial base. You'll find tons of treasure chests in the base's supply room, but they're sealed for now. After you complete the tasks in tip 19, return to the base; the treasure will be all yours.

⑯ Get Hooked

Following the long journey through Vector, you'll need to make a break for freedom. However, Kefka's cranes don't want to let you go so easily. Use Cura to keep your party healthy, and blast the left crane with physical attacks and the right crane with Thunder magic. Use Locke to steal the Debilitator (if you're lucky) from the right crane; it's the only way to get the tool until much later in the game.

Cure
Fire
Poisona
Regen
295/295
MP
005

⑲ Peace at Last?

To maximize your rewards from your peaceful visit to the imperial palace, talk to as many guards as you can, then answer the questions during dinner as follows: third answer, first answer, second answer, second answer. Ask each optional question once only, then say that the espers have gone too far. Correctly tell Gestahl what question you asked first, then take a rest. Say that you want to hear that the war is truly over, then agree to Gestahl's request. Success will give you access to the base's treasure room, and you'll receive two relics.

I heard you're the strongest of the Returners... Just how tough are you?

Some guards will fight you if you talk to them, but speaking with them is still to your benefit.

⑳ The Mage's Village

Something funny's going on in Thamasa. Explore the entire village and talk to everyone to find out what they're hiding, then introduce yourself to Strago and Relm. After you speak with Strago, the inn will drop its rate to 1 gil. Stay the night there.

Flame Eater
Balloon 4
Terra 704
Locke 751
Strago 332

When the fire breaks out, team up with Strago to extinguish the blaze.

Relm

Precocious Relm Arrowny's Sketch skill isn't very useful, but her magic stats are incredible. When she learns to control monsters, she becomes a force to be reckoned with.

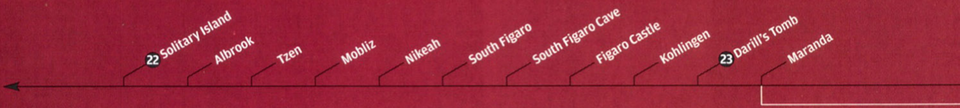
Strago

Relm's grandfather, Strago Magus, is an experienced monster hunter with blue mage abilities. He can learn enemy attacks by experiencing their effects, then cast them with his Lore skill.

㉑ The Ultimate Battle

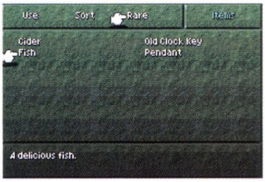
The Floating Continent is the toughest challenge yet, and it's protected by the deadly Ultima Weapon. Ultima Weapon has no particular weaknesses, so hit it with your strongest Tools and Blitzes, and keep your HP up with Cura; use Osmose if your MP runs low. As you're fleeing the Floating Continent, wait as long as possible for Shadow to appear; otherwise you'll never see him again.

Auto Crossbow : 1
Chainsaw : 1
Flash : 1
Drill : 1
Bioblaster : 1
Noiseblaster : 1



㉒ Gone Fishin'

When the game picks up a full year after the events on the Floating Continent, you'll find yourself in control of Celes, stranded on an island with former imperial scientist Cid. To nurse Cid back to health, walk to the water south of the cabin, grab a fast-moving fish, and bring it to Cid. After you give him many delicious fish, he'll finally get healthy again.

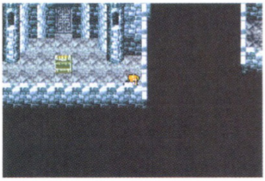


A delicious fish.

If you check your rare items, you can see if the fish is delicious, normal, or rotten. Only the delicious fish will heal Cid.

㉓ Tomb Raid

Darill's Tomb houses an airship, along with a useful secret relic. Upon entering the tomb, go south through several rooms until you reach a chamber that contains four tombstones. Read all four tombstones, then return to the main room of the tomb. Enter the room in the northwest corner and carve the words into the tombstone in this order: "ERAU," "QSSI," "DLRO," and "WEHT." You'll then receive a hint about a treasure hidden on floor B3F. Head south out of the room, go south again, and take the stairs to B3F. A hidden passage in the east wall will lead you to a Growth Egg.



Stand two steps south of the chest, walk east through the wall, then go north to get the egg.

㉔ Survive the Storm

You'll reach Mt. Zozo by passing through the rusted door in the town of Zozo; buy Rust-Rid from the merchant to open the door. As you're exploring the mountain, you'll come across the Storm Dragon, one of eight dragons that roam the world. Unless your levels are very high, the Storm Dragon is a tough customer—it's at level 74 and boasts 42,000 HP. Have at least two party members stay on defense and use Cura on the party every turn. Have your other characters attack with Thunder or Thundara—the Storm Dragon's weakness. If your MP runs low, cast Osmose.

Storm Dragon
Edgar 202
Celes 1696
Sabin 1615
Setzer 998

The Storm Dragon is powerful, but Thunder spells will put it down.

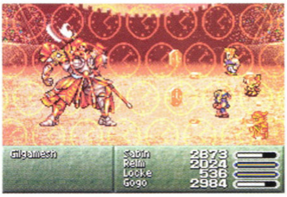
Dragon Quest

Eight legendary dragons were released from the depths thanks to Kefka's world-altering madness. When you defeat all eight, you'll receive the Crusader magicite and gain access to the new Dragons' Den dungeon. Use the list below to locate all eight dragons.

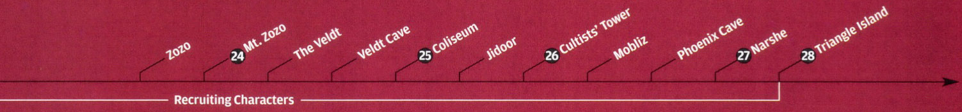
NAME	LOCATION
Storm Dragon	Mt. Zozo
Red Dragon	Phoenix Cave
Ice Dragon	Narshe
Earth Dragon	Opera House
Blue Dragon	Ancient Castle
Holy Dragon	Tower of Fanatics
Gold Dragon	Kefka's Tower
Skull Dragon	Kefka's Tower

㉕ Bet On It

There are plenty of reasons to visit the Coliseum. Not only can you fight for rare items (see chart), but it's also where you'll recruit Shadow (assuming you already rescued him from the cave on the Veldt). Wager the Ichigeki to fight Shadow; when you beat him, he'll join your crew. You can also find the Gilgamesh magicite here. First talk to the man outside the auction house in Jidoor, then bid on the Excalipoor and wager it at the Coliseum. After you win the fight, Gilgamesh will challenge your party. Use Hastega and Dispel along with physical attacks to win.

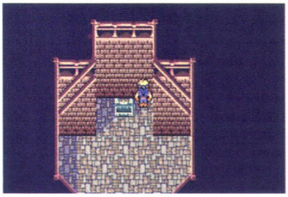


BET	WIN
Elixir	Rename Card
Merit Award	Rename Card
Rename Card	Miracle Shoes
Miracle Shoes	Tintinnabulum
Megalixir	Tintinnabulum
Tintinnabulum	Growth Egg
Safety Bit	Dragon Horn
Celestriad	Dragon Horn
Dragon Horn	Gold Hairpin
Gold Hairpin	Dragon Horn
Ribbon	Gold Hairpin
Impartisan	Cat-Ear Hood
Cat-Ear Hood	Merit Award
Behemoth Suit	Snow Scarf
Ultima Weapon	Gladius
Murasame	Masamune
Masamune	Murakumo
Murakumo	Holy Lance


Zozo
24 Mt. Zozo
The Veldt
Veldt Cave
25 Coliseum
Jidoor
26 Cultists' Tower
Mobliz
Phoenix Cave
27 Narshe
28 Triangle Island
Recruiting Characters

㉖ Magicians Only

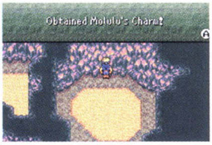
With Relm in your party, talk to Strago outside the Cultists' Tower—this will cause him to rejoin your crew. As you climb the tower, cast Float on your party to avoid getting hit by Quake, and consider equipping Reflect Rings so you can bounce spells off yourself and bypass enemy defenses. The Magic Master at the top is very tough; cast Reraise on your party to ensure you survive his Ultima spell.



In the first room that contains a treasure chest, check the back wall for a switch. It will open a door one level below, where you'll find the Air Anchor.

㉗ Recruiting in the Cold

Return to Narshe, enter the mines, and make your way to the moogles' cave. Inside you'll find Mog—talk to him to have him rejoin your party. After he departs, check the spot where he was standing to acquire Molulu's Charm. Put Mog in your party, then head to the place where the frozen esper is located. Defeat it, then jump off the cliff. Seek out Umaro and beat him in battle to acquire another character.



Obtained Molulu's Charm!

Molulu's Charm prevents all random battles. Only Mog can wear it.

Umaro

Umaro is a powerful, uncontrollable yeti, but for some reason he listens to whatever Mog the moogle has to say. Even though you can't guide his actions, he makes up for his lack of finesse with sheer brute force.

㉘ In the Belly of the Beast

Fly to the triangle-shaped island in the northeast region of the world map and wander around until you encounter a Zone Eater. Don't fight the beast—let it inhale your entire party; you'll be transported to a hidden area. Be cautious when you get to the wooden bridges that have people wandering on them; if the loiterers touch you, you'll fall. Nonetheless, persevere and get the treasure chest on the far left of the chamber—it contains a must-have relic for Relm. When you get to the room with the falling ceiling, run from safe spot to safe spot to avoid getting crushed. At the end of the area you'll find a new character.

Gogo

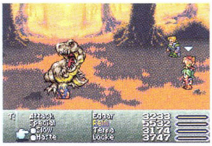
Deep within the secret cave resides Gogo, a mime who can take on the skills of any character in the game. If you want to use Edgar's Tools, Sabin's Blitzes, or Cyan's Bushido attacks, they're yours—go to his status screen to assign any three skills of your choosing. Gogo can also mimic the last action performed by a character in battle—including esper summons—without any cost to himself.

Attack
Mug
Magic
Items
Locke 3482
Relm 2985
Setzer 1023
Shadow 1923

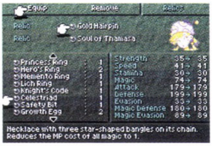
The Zone Eater sucks—literally. Defend and heal until it ingests your whole party.

㉙ Dino Might

North of the Veldt (and west of Triangle Island) you'll find a forest populated by vicious dinosaurs that yield plentiful experience and AP. The Tyrannosaurs are tough, but the Brachiosaurs are the real headache—they can cast Ultima and destroy your entire party. The pain is worth the effort, however. The Brachiosaurs randomly drop Celestriads (which reduce all spell costs to 1 MP), and you can steal Ribbons from them as well. Use Relm's control ability to restrain the dinos while you pummel them with spells.


Attack
Special
Slow
Haste
Edgar 3233
Relm 5532
Terra 3174
Locke 3747

Use Relm to control the dinos so Locke can steal from them easily.

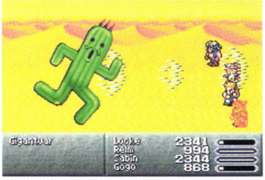

Equip
Remove
Relics
Relic Gold Hairpin
Relic Soul of Thamasa
Princess Ring 1
Hero's Ring 2
Memento Ring 1
Lich Ring 1
Knight's Code 1
Celestriad 1
Safety Bit 1
Growth Egg 2
Strength 35→ 35
Speed 41→ 41
Stamina 30→ 30
Magic 74→ 74
Attack 179→ 179
Defense 199→ 199
Evasion 33→ 33
Magic Defense 180→ 180
Magic Evasion 89→ 89

Necklace with three star-shaped bangles on its chain.
Reduces the MP cost of all magic to 1.

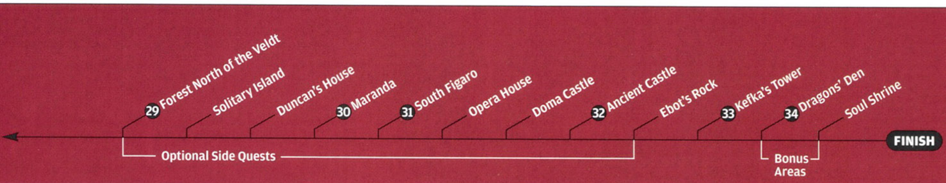
Celestriads are rare, but they're among the best relics in the game.

㉚ 10,000 Needles of Pain

Talk to the man in the southwest corner of Maranda to get the scoop on cactaurs, then head to the desert south of town and wander to defeat the critters in random battles. After you've slain 10 cactaurs, you'll have a chance of encountering Gigantaur—a huge cactaur. Before it dies, it'll attack 10 times with 1,000 Needles, so keep your health full at all times and don't fight it unless you have a cumulative HP of more than 10,000.

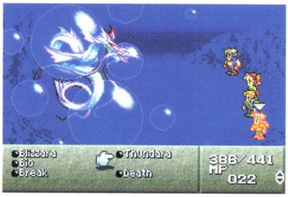

Gigantuar
Locke 2341
Relm 994
Sabin 2344
Gogo 868

Defeating Gigantaur will earn you the Cactaur magicite, which teaches Hastega and more.


29 Forest North of the Veldt
Solitary Island
Duncan's House
30 Maranda
31 South Figaro
Opera House
Doma Castle
32 Ancient Castle
Ebot's Rock
33 Kefka's Tower
34 Dragons' Den
Soul Shrine
FINISH
Optional Side Quests
Bonus Areas

㉛ The Creature of the Deep

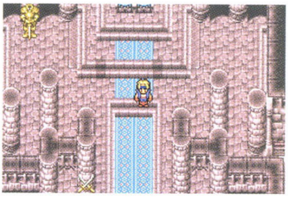
You can acquire another magicite crystal when you visit South Figaro. Talk to the man near the town entrance to hear the rumors of an underwater creature, then take the ferry to Kohlingen. Leviathan will attack as you're making the trek. Fend it off with lightning attacks like Thundaga. It tends to counterattack with powerful water spells, so keep your healers ready. Victory will earn you new magicite.


Blizzara
Bio
Break
Thundara
Death
388/441
MP
022

Once you defeat Leviathan, he'll give you his power in the form of magicite.

㉜ A Lost Land

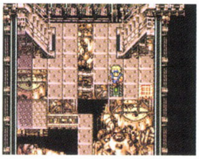
When you use Figaro Castle to travel beneath the sands, you'll encounter an irregularity in the stratum. Tell the engineer that you want to stop and investigate, then exit through the prison and proceed through the cave to reach an ancient castle. Take the door to the left of the castle's main entrance to find a treasure chest containing the invaluable Master's Scroll relic, then investigate the statue in the throne room to get the Odin magicite. Stand in front of the right-hand throne and move down five spaces, then press A to activate a switch that reveals stairs in the room to the right. Take the stairs and investigate the queen's statue to change Odin into Raiden.



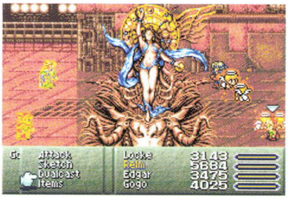
To find the hidden switch, stand in front of the right-hand throne and walk downward five steps.

㉝ Madman's Paradise

When you get to Kefka's Tower, you must divide your crew into three parties. Make sure each team includes a powerful mage (Terra, Celes, and Relm are good choices) and a strong physical fighter (such as Sabin, Edgar, or Cyan). The first party actually does the least fighting, so put the bulk of your strength into teams two and three. Proceed through the area with the second team (don't forget to hit the switch that will allow the others to proceed), then the third team, and finally the first team. Eventually all three teams will meet up in the same room and activate switches that allow them to advance and battle the Warring Triad. Once they're gone it's time to take on Kefka.



Press this switch to allow the first team to proceed.


Gc
Attack
Sketch
Dualcast
Items
Locke 3143
Relm 5684
Edgar 3475
Gogo 4025

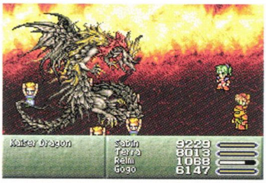
Stay on the defensive while fighting the bosses. Equip Ribbons and cast Reraise to be safe.

Kefka
Locke 3100
Umaro 1111
Relm 6050
Gogo 3202

Put an end to Kefka's madness by blasting him with strong physical attacks and Ultima.

㉞ Where Dragons Roam

Once you've defeated all eight dragons, you'll receive a tablet indicating that you can access the all-new Dragons' Den dungeon. Before you attempt the challenging dungeon, you should raise your characters to at least level 75 and acquire as many Ribbons and Celestriads as you can manage. To find the dungeon, fly to the Coliseum then fly north to a small island where there's a single tree. When you attempt to land on the island, you'll be prompted to divide your crew into three teams. As in Kefka's Tower, balance out your teams between magic and power; switch between the teams to slay dragons, activate switches, and help the other parties advance. The eight dragons are much tougher than before, especially the Red Dragon (stay healthy until it exhausts itself and dies) and the Skull Dragon (drain its MP to defeat it). The final boss of the den is the mighty Kaiser Dragon. Use two characters to attack the boss and the other two characters for healing, and cast Quick frequently to keep the battle in your favor. If you defeat the Kaiser Dragon, you'll unlock one final bonus challenge: the Soul Shrine, where you must fight over 100 waves of enemies.


Kaiser Dragon
Sabin 9229
Terra 8013
Relm 1068
Gogo 6147

Use non-elemental attacks like Ultima and Phantom Rush to damage the boss.

Gr
Attack
Sketch
Dualcast
Items
Sabin 9178
Relm 8648
Locke 5868
Gogo 7881

Your reward for slaying the Kaiser Dragon is the Diabolos magicite.

POWER QUIZ

VIRTUAL INSANITY

Everything old is new again thanks to Wii's Virtual Console—and here's your chance to test your knowledge of some of its initial releases. Are you classically trained, or do you need a lesson from the old school? Visit **nintendopower.com/quiz** for the answers today, or wait for your next issue.

1 Which of these Virtual Console games does Mario not appear in?

a. Donkey Kong
b. Donkey Kong Jr.
c. Wario's Woods
d. Pinball

2 Which country's team is selectable in Ice Hockey?

a. Norway
b. Finland
c. Poland
d. Bulgaria

3 Super Mario 64 introduced what ability to Mario's repertoire?

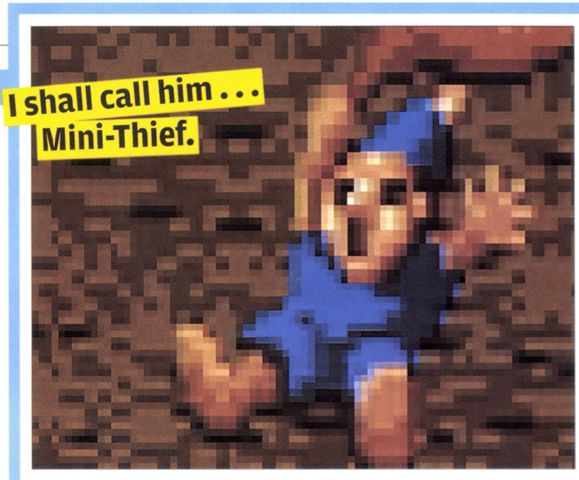
a. flying
b. wall-kicking
c. hammer-throwing
d. Yoshi-riding

4 In addition to Super Star Soldier, what was another vertically scrolling shooter Hudson was known for?

a. Space Megaforce
b. Blazing Lasers
c. Starship Hector
d. Lightning Force

5 What's the final course in the Knight League in F-Zero?

a. Silence
b. Big Blue
c. White Land II
d. Fire Field



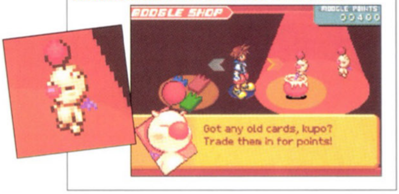
I shall call him . . . Mini-Thief.

PIXEL-PERFECT

NAME THAT SCREENSHOT

Virtual Console can take you to some wild places . . . including worlds populated by terrified gnomes?

VOLUME 208's FEATURE: KINGDOM HEARTS: CHAIN OF MEMORIES



Got any old cards, kupo? Trade them in for points!

6 Which of these is a backdrop in Urban Champion?

a. gas station
b. snack bar
c. pawn shop
d. drug store

7 Bonk's Adventure originated on TurboGrafx-16, but what other system has a Bonk game appeared on?

a. Sony PlayStation
b. Sega Saturn
c. Game Boy
d. 3DO

8 What was the concept for Ristar's main character early in the game's development?

a. an echidna who punched through walls
b. a chameleon who could blend in to the environment
c. a gorilla who could walk on the ceiling
d. a rabbit who grabbed things with his ears

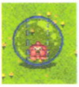
9 What does Neff say before you fight a boss in Altered Beast?

a. Welcome to your doom!
b. You came here to die!
c. All your beast are belong to us!
d. Down with you!

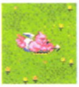
10 The game Columns is associated with which ancient culture?

a. Mesopotamian
b. Egyptian
c. Phoenician
d. Greek

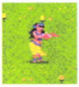
11 Which enemy in ToeJam & Earl can temporarily scramble your controls?



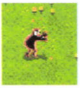
a. hamster-in-a-ball



b. Cupid



c. hula dancers



d. the Boogeyman

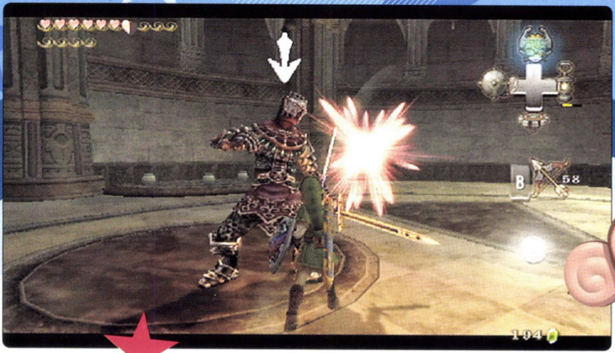
12 What character gives you advice in SimCity?

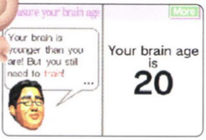
a. Dr. Wright
b. Dr. Hawkins
c. Dr. Maxis
d. Dr. Miyamoto

Extra Credit: In Japan, games from the MSX system are available on Virtual Console. Which game originated on MSX?

a. Metal Gear Solid
b. Snatcher
c. Policenauts
d. Contra

Power Quiz Answers from Vol. 208 1: a, 2: c, 3: d, 4: b, 5: c, 6: a, 7: b, 8: c, 9: d, 10: a, 11: d, 12: a, 13: b




Measure your brain age

More

Your brain is younger than you are! But you still need to train!

...

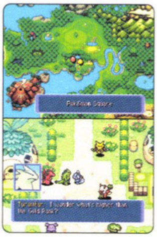
Your brain age is 20

NINTENDO POWER AWARDS NOMINATIONS

2006

It's that time of the year again! Choose the best of the best from 2006. Look over the candidates carefully then put down your picks on the Player's Poll card. We'll post the complete results in Volume 215.

BUSTEREDIT
Left Arm
Right Arm


Pokémon Square

Pratty

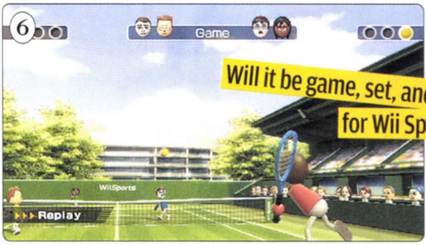
You're quite a nasty little runt, aren't you!?

Wii

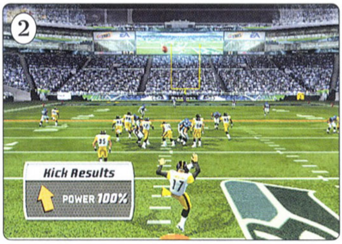
A GAME OF THE YEAR

Even though we've lived with Wii for only a few months, there's already a strong group of titles for the young system. With the pick-up-and-play intuitiveness of games like Wii Sports or Banana Blitz, or the toolsy control of Trauma Center, even a masterpiece like Twilight Princess will have a run for its money in this collection of great games.

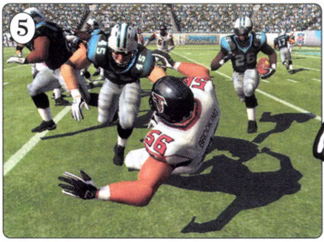
1. **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS**
2. **MADDEN NFL 07**
3. **RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS**
4. **SUPER MONKEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ**
5. **TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION**
6. **Wii SPORTS**


6
Game
WiiSports
Replay

Will it be game, set, and match for Wii Sports?


2
Kick Results
POWER 100%

4
SCORE 4300
005
HURRY UP
47 km/h



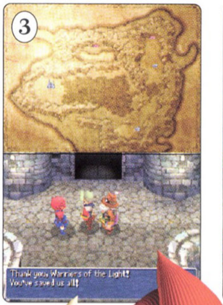
Vote for me or get E. Coli from my crops!
3

GCN

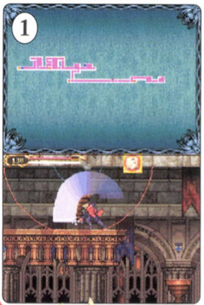
B GAME OF THE YEAR

In the past, this category has been one of the fiercest and most robust, but transition to Wii development has left the cupboards a little bare for the now-venerable GameCube. However, even in the systems' twilight we find some real gems (and no, that isn't a hint at what we want to see win).

1. **BATEN KAITOS: ORIGINS**
2. **CHIBI-ROBO**
3. **HARVEST MOON: MAGICAL MELODY**
4. **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS**
5. **MADDEN NFL 07**
6. **TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND**



Thank you, Warriors of the Light! You've saved us all!



DS

C GAME OF THE YEAR

Two years into the life of the DS, the brilliant little handheld is just hitting its stride. This was the year of the big franchise—Mario, Metroid, and Castlevania—but all the buzz is around Elite Beat Agents, the high-energy rhythm game. But does the addictive touch-screen rocker pop and lock enough to take the award over this year's collection of giants?

1. CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN
2. ELITE BEAT AGENTS
3. FINAL FANTASY III
4. METROID PRIME HUNTERS
5. NEW SUPER MARIO BROS.
6. STAR FOX COMMAND

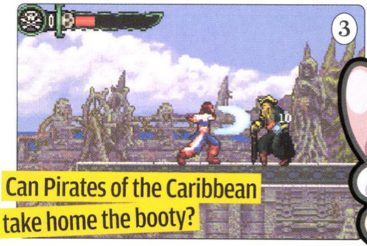
Mario? Whatev. Super Bowser Bros. is where it's at!
5

Game Boy Advance

D GAME OF THE YEAR

Rumors of the Game Boy Advance's demise have been greatly exaggerated—the DS may get all the press, but the GBA keeps selling like hotcakes. RPGs filled the ranks of the handheld's top games, but Drill Dozer and Pirates of the Caribbean will give the bigger games a a serious challenge.

1. DRILL DOZER
2. FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE
3. PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST
4. POKéMON MYSTERY DUNGEON: RED RESCUE TEAM
5. SUMMON NIGHT: SWORDCRAFT STORY 2
6. TALES OF PHANTASIA



Can Pirates of the Caribbean take home the booty?

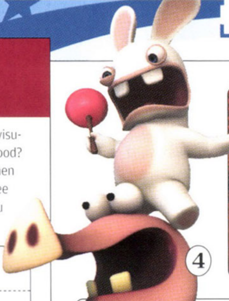
2
02:13
Red Dragon
Blue Dragon
Lenna 1508
Bartz 1996
Krile 2034
Faris 1683

Consoles

E BEST GRAPHICS

A term like "Best Graphics" is pretty loaded—does it mean that the visuals were well done? Does it mean that the art style is original and good? Or does it mean that the game still looks nice and runs smoothly when the action is intense? There's no definitive answer, and each nominee excels in at least one of these ways. It's up to you to decide what you think is most important.

1. **BATEN KAITOS ORIGINS (GCN)**
2. **EXCITE TRUCK (Wii)**
3. **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS (Wii)**
4. **RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS (Wii)**
5. **RED STEEL (Wii)**
6. **SONIC RIDERS (GCN)**



10/155
22.2
4:30.0
1/3
Lap
DRIFT
TREE RUN
TEMP
2

SA2
You have the right to vote for E. B. A.
2

All Systems

G BEST MUSIC

A game's music is one of its most important—and most overlooked—features. Music helps to set the theme and mood of a game, and lends to a game's immersive feeling. Suffice it to say that most of the games on this list wouldn't be nearly as memorable without their amazing compositions.

1. **CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN (DS)**
2. **ELITE BEAT AGENTS (DS)**
3. **FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE (GBA)**
4. **THE LEGEND OF SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING (GCN)**
5. **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS (Wii & GCN)**
6. **THE RUB RABBITS! (DS)**

DS

F BEST GRAPHICS

When the DS debuted, it took its knocks for being a little light in the power department. But after seeing the system push pixels and polygons in the likes of Portrait of Ruin and Metroid Prime Hunters, the DS is silencing the naysayers. Don't overlook Elite Beat Agents' thrilling art style, either.

1. **CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN**
2. **CHILDREN OF MANA**
3. **ELITE BEAT AGENTS**
4. **FINAL FANTASY III**
5. **METROID PRIME HUNTERS**
6. **RESIDENT EVIL: DEADLY SILENCE**

POINTS
0 / 7
99
07
5

All Systems

H BEST SOUND/ VOICE ACTING

Imagine a game like Call of Duty 3 without the barks of fellow soldiers or the crack of machine-gun fire. Or visualize FIFA 07 without the swelling chants and cheers of the crowds. They're simply not the same games. Even more than its music, a game's sound can make or break the whole experience.

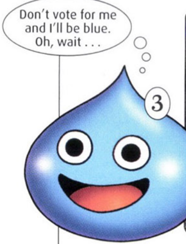
- ① **CALL OF DUTY 3 (Wii)**
- ② **FIFA 07 (GCN)**
- ③ **THE LEGEND OF SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING (GCN)**
- ④ **RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS (Wii)**
- ⑤ **RESIDENT EVIL: DEADLY SILENCE (DS)**
- ⑥ **TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND (GCN)**

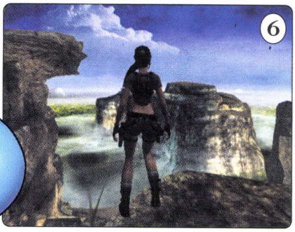
③

He looks harmless now, but see what happens when he loses.

①

②


Don't vote for me and I'll be blue. Oh, wait . . .
3


⑥

All Systems

J BEST ADVENTURE

Sure, Twilight Princess is the 800-pound gorilla in this category, but there are plenty of other strong titles to consider. For example, both Chibi-Robo and Rocket Slime came out of nowhere to become two of the best games of the year, and Lara Croft's return to prominence is very well-deserved. And Castlevania? Iga has just about perfected his formula.

- ① **CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN (DS)**
- ② **CHIBI-ROBO (GCN)**
- ③ **DRAGON QUEST HEROES: ROCKET SLIME (DS)**
- ④ **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS (Wii & GCN)**
- ⑤ **RESIDENT EVIL: DEADLY SILENCE (DS)**
- ⑥ **TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND (GCN)**

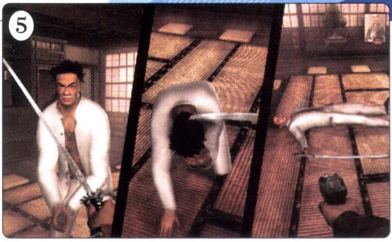
All Systems

I BEST RPG/ STRATEGY GAME

The DS and GBA were awash with good RPGs this year, but a few GCN games managed to sneak onto the list, as well. At first glance, Magical Melody might seem like an odd candidate for this category, but we can't think of a better definition for "role-playing" than assuming the life of someone and developing fame and fortune through hard work.

- ① **AGE OF EMPIRES: THE AGE OF KINGS (DS)**
- ② **BATEN KAITOS ORIGINS (GCN)**
- ③ **FINAL FANTASY III (DS)**
- ④ **FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE (GBA)**
- ⑤ **HARVEST MOON: MAGICAL MELODY (GCN)**
- ⑥ **POKéMON MYSTERY DUNGEON (DS & GBA)**

①


⑤

All Systems

L BEST SHOOTER/ ACTION GAME

Talk about a mixed bag—you have gritty, realistic action in Red Steel, loony plunger-shootin' in Rayman Raving Rabbids, and an old-school 2-D blast-'em-up in Metal Slug Anthology. But they all share the same things in common—charismatic heroes, big guns, and heart-racing action.

① **MEGA MAN ZX (DS)**

② **METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY (Wii)**

③ **METROID PRIME HUNTERS (DS)**

④ **RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS (Wii)**

⑤ **RED STEEL (Wii)**

⑥ **STAR FOX COMMAND (DS)**

All Systems

K BEST PLATFORMER

It's not too surprising that the company whose mascot is Mario publishes good platformers—all the nominees but Banana Blitz come from the Big N (although some, such as Game Freak's Drill Dozer, were developed elsewhere). We'll admit Banana Blitz isn't your traditional platformer, but if your goal is to run and jump between platforms, then. . . .

① **DRILL DOZER (GBA)**

② **KIRBY: SQUEAK SQUAD (DS)**

③ **NEW SUPER MARIO BROS. (DS)**

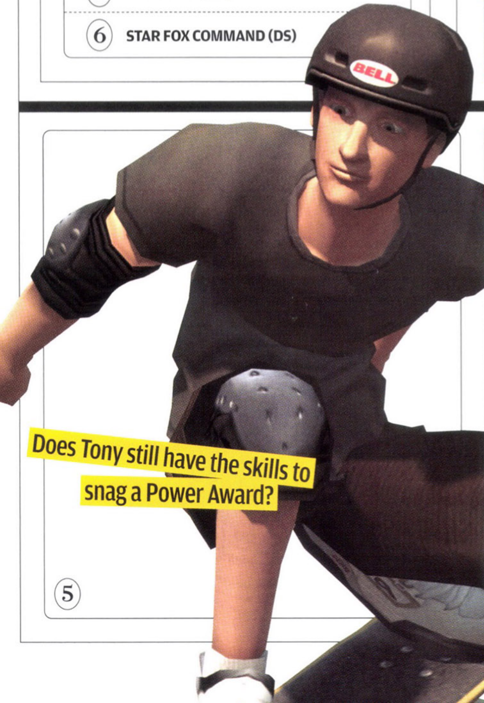
④ **SUPER PRINCESS PEACH (DS)**

⑤ **SUPER MONKEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ (Wii)**

⑥ **YOSHI'S ISLAND DS (DS)**

④

⑥


Does Tony still have the skills to snag a Power Award?

⑤

All Consoles

M BEST SPORTS/ RACING GAME

Before you get all worked up, hear us out. Madden is arguably the best sports franchise on the planet, and it deserves recognition on both systems. Thanks to the Wii's controls, the nominees are significantly different, but they each hold up on their own merits. Or if you can't decide which version you prefer, choose instead one of the awesome racing games or Wii sports.

① **EXCITE TRUCK (Wii)**

② **MADDEN NFL 07 (Wii)**

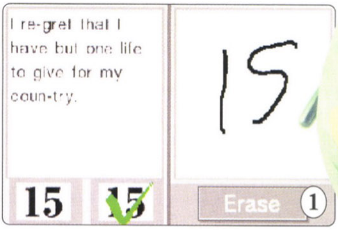
③ **MADDEN NFL 07 (GCN)**

④ **SONIC RIDERS (GCN)**

⑤ **TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM (Wii)**

⑥ **Wii SPORTS (Wii)**

⑤
Time 397
Reserve 013
Morale


I re-gret that I have but one life to give for my coun-try.

③
Do not under-estimate the power of an Elebit.

All Systems

N BEST ALTER-NATIVE GAME

There are some games that just don't fit into the normal categories (a military strategy/pinball game set in feudal Japan? Uhh . . . platformer?). Often, these games are on the cutting edge of game development—you'll hear the echoes of these titles throughout the industry for years to come.

① **BRAIN AGE: TRAIN YOUR BRAIN IN MINUTES A DAY (DS)**

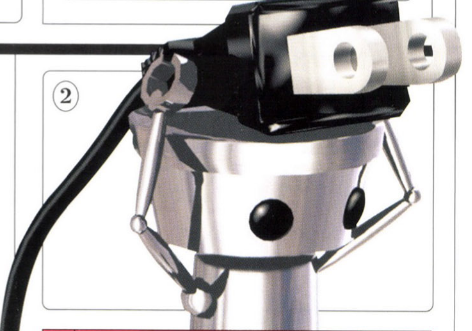
② **COOKING MAMA (DS)**

③ **ELEBITS (Wii)**

④ **ELITE BEAT AGENTS (DS)**

⑤ **ODAMA (GCN)**

⑥ **TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION (Wii)**



All Systems

O BEST MULTIPLAYER

Taunts? Trash-talkin'? Victory dances? These phenomena wouldn't exist if it weren't for multiplayer gaming. This year's collection of awesome multiplayer titles offers a chance to do these things and more, from Wii Sports' team competitions to Children of Mana's stellar co-op mode. And Tetris DS and Metroid Prime Hunters helped establish Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection as a multiplayer powerhouse during 2006.

① **CHILDREN OF MANA (DS)**

② **MADDEN NFL 07 (Wii)**

③ **METROID PRIME HUNTERS (DS)**

④ **SUPER MONKEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ (Wii)**

⑤ **TETRIS DS (DS)**

⑥ **Wii SPORTS (Wii)**

Children of Mana's brilliant co-op mode is all grown up.

All Systems

P BEST NEW CHARACTER

Doctors, cat burglars, and dancing government agents—2006's best new characters are as diverse as the games they star in. Some games even succeed in conveying a character's personality without saying a word, as evidenced by the likes of Chibi-Robo and Rocket.

① **AGENTS J, DEREK, AND MORRIS (ELITE BEAT AGENTS)**

② **CHIBI-ROBO (CHIBI-ROBO)**

③ **DR. NOZOMI WEAVER (TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION)**

④ **JILL (DRILL DOZER)**

⑤ **MIDNA (THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS)**

⑥ **ROCKET (DRAGON QUEST HEROES: ROCKET SLIME)**

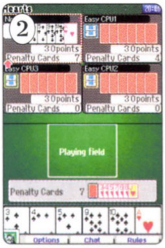
All Systems

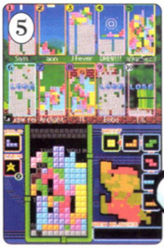
Q BEST STORY/ WRITING

Super Mario Bros. was a great game, but the video game medium has come a long way since "The Princess is in another castle." Some stories seem uniquely suited to the video game realm—it would be virtually impossible to translate Contact's subversive plot to television, for example.

① **CHIBI-ROBO (GCN)**
② **CONTACT (DS)**
③ **FINAL FANTASY V (GBA)**
④ **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS (Wii & GCN)**
⑤ **POKéMON MYSTERY DUNGEON (DS & GBA)**
⑥ **TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION (Wii)**

②
What a pushover!


②
Hearts
Easy CPU1
30points
Penalty Cards 7
Penalty Cards 4
Easy CPU3
Easy CPU2
Penalty Cards 0
Playing field
Options
Chat
Rules



DS

R BEST WI-FI FUNCTIONALITY

Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection isn't simply about head-to-head gaming across the Internet, and DS developers have kept that in mind. All of this category's nominees feature multiplayer modes, but most of them also add that little something extra that separates them from the pack.

① **CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN**—*CO-OP PLAY, ONLINE ITEM-TRADING*
② **CLUBHOUSE GAMES**—*GLOBAL LEADERBOARDS, COMPETITIVE PLAY*
③ **MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG 2**—*CUSTOM-DESIGNED-LEVEL SHARING*
④ **METROID PRIME HUNTERS**—*SKILL-BASED GAME MATCHING, VOICE CHAT*
⑤ **TETRIS DS**—*MULTIPLE MULTIPLAYER MODES*
⑥ **TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM**—*COMMUNITY DESIGN SHARING, VOICE CHAT*

Wii

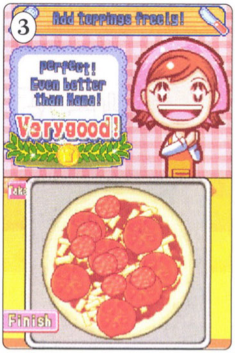
S BEST OVERALL Wii CONTROL

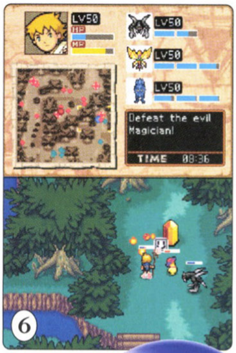
The Wii remote is so different from past consoles' controllers that we're still trying to wrap our heads around its potential. Fortunately, the following games have made it a little easier for us to see the light. Which game has you praising the Wii remote the most?

① **ELEBITS**
② **MADDEN NFL 07**
③ **SUPER MONKEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ**
④ **SUPER SWING GOLF**
⑤ **TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION**
⑥ **Wii SPORTS**

④
Shining Sand
Hole
Swing
1P
Shot 1
Score 0
232y
Pang
1W
115y
232y
2m

Keep your head down, elbow straight, and vote for Super Swing Golf.



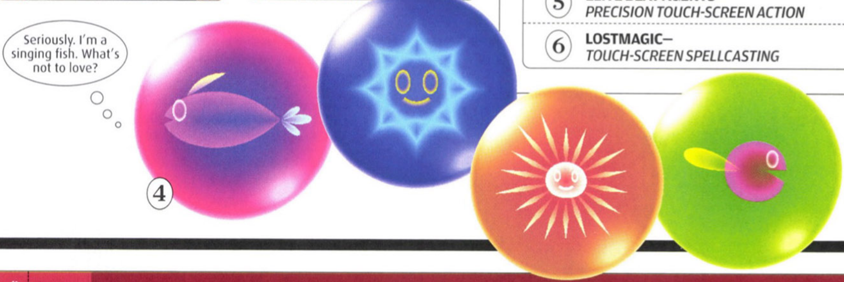


DS

T BEST DS FUNCTIONALITY

What more can you say about the DS? Between the touch screen, dual screens, a microphone, and online play, there might not be a better platform for innovative game development. But which game utilized the DS the best? That's for you to decide.

1. **BRAIN AGE–** *HANDWRITING AND VOICE RECOGNITION*
2. **CONTACT–** *DUAL-SCREEN SIMULTANEOUS ACTION*
3. **COOKING MAMA–***COMBINED USE OF TOUCH-SCREEN AND MICROPHONE*
4. **ELECTROPLANKTON–***COMBINED USE OF TOUCH-SCREEN AND MICROPHONE*
5. **ELITE BEAT AGENTS–** *PRECISION TOUCH-SCREEN ACTION*
6. **LOSTMAGIC–** *TOUCH-SCREEN SPELLCASTING*


Seriously. I'm a singing fish. What's not to love?
4

All Systems

U OVERALL GAME OF THE YEAR

This year we're adding a little twist to the overall GotY category: instead of voting for only your favorite title, we're asking you to pick your three favorite games of 2006 in order. We'll give a rundown of the top games when we reveal the winners down the road.

1. **BATEN KAITOS ORIGINS (GCN)**
2. **BRAIN AGE (DS)**
3. **CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN (DS)**
4. **CHIBI-ROBO (GCN)**
5. **DRAGON QUEST HEROES: ROCKET SLIME (DS)**
6. **DRILL DOZER (GBA)**
7. **ELITE BEAT AGENTS (DS)**
8. **EXCITE TRUCK (Wii)**
9. **FINAL FANTASY III (DS)**
10. **FINAL FANTASY V ADVANCE (GBA)**
11. **HARVEST MOON: MAGICAL MELODY (GCN)**
12. **KIRBY: SQUEAK SQUAD (DS)**
13. **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS (Wii & GCN)**
14. **MADDEN NFL 07 (Wii)**
15. **MARIO VS DONKEY KONG 2: MARCH OF THE MINIS (DS)**
16. **MEGA MAN ZX (DS)**
17. **METROID PRIME HUNTERS (DS)**
18. **NEW SUPER MARIO BROS. (DS)**
19. **POKéMON MYSTERY DUNGEON (DS & GBA)**
20. **RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS (Wii)**
21. **RED STEEL (Wii)**
22. **RESIDENT EVIL: DEADLY SILENCE (DS)**
23. **STAR FOX COMMAND (DS)**
24. **SUPER MONKEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ (Wii)**
25. **TETRIS DS (DS)**
26. **TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND (GCN)**
27. **TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM (Wii)**
28. **TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION (Wii)**
29. **Wii SPORTS (Wii)**
30. **YOSHI'S ISLAND DS (DS)**

A winner is you!

NINTENDO POWER
PLAYER'S POLL SWEEPSTAKES
March 2007

GRAND PRIZE 5 Winners

When you vote, you're not only getting your opinion heard, you're entering to win a stellar prize package! With Wii and DS, you'll also be able to play all GCN and Game Boy Advance games.

1 Wii
1 DS Lite
1 copy of Wii game of year
1 copy of GCN game of year
1 copy of DS game of year
1 copy of GBA game of year

Wii
?
NINTENDO GAMECUBE
?
GAME BOY ADVANCE
?
NINTENDO DS lite
?
Wii

2ND PRIZE 10 Winners

Round up a collection of the top titles for each of Nintendo's systems. What will you win? Is Zelda a slam dunk? Will Mario make the grade? Or will a dark horse emerge victorious?

1 copy of Wii game of year
1 copy of GCN game of year
1 copy of DS game of year
1 copy of GBA game of year

3RD PRIZE 50 Winners

Be among the first to wear Nintendo Power's awesome new 2007 t-shirt!

1 NP t-shirt

Official Sweepstakes Rules

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE ODDS OF WINNING. Only legal U.S. or Canadian residents (excluding Puerto Rico and Quebec) who are not employees of Nintendo of America Inc. ("Sponsor") or its affiliates (or their immediate families) are eligible to enter. Void where prohibited. To enter, either fill out and mail in the Player's Poll entry form or print your name, address, telephone number and the words "Nintendo Power Awards" on a 4" x 6" postcard, and mail the entry to this address:

NINTENDO POWER
PLAYER'S POLL VOL. 213
P.O. BOX 97062
REDMOND, WA 98073-9762

One entry per household. To be eligible to win a prize, entries must be completed and received by Sponsor by 3/01/07 ("Entry Deadline"). Sponsor is not responsible for: (a) late, lost, illegible, or misdirected mail; (b) disruptions or damages due to events beyond Sponsor's control; or (c) printing or typographical errors. Entrants consent to being placed on a mailing list for promotional materials. On or about 3/20/07, winners will be randomly drawn from all eligible entries received by the Entry Deadline. Canadian entrants may be required to correctly answer a timed skill testing question to claim a prize. Sponsor will attempt to notify winners by mail by 4/20/07. Prizes not claimed within 14 days after notification or which are undeliverable will be forfeited and will not be awarded to an alternate winner. Unless prohibited by law, winners consent to Sponsor's promotional use of their names, likenesses and other personal information without further compensation. Odds of winning depend on total number of eligible entries received. Many will enter, a total of 65 will win. No transfer or substitution of prizes permitted, except that Sponsor may substitute a prize of equal or greater value for any prize. For a copy of these rules, or (after 4/20/07) a list of winners, send your request to the address above. VT residents may omit return postage. Grand Prize: Five (5) Grand Prize winners will each receive one (1) Nintendo Wii Console, one (1) Nintendo DS Lite video game system (color to be chosen by winner. Choice of colors are Polar White, Coral Pink or Onyx), one (1) copy of the 2006 Wii video game of the year, one (1) copy of the 2006 Nintendo GameCube video game of the year, one (1) copy of the 2006 Nintendo DS video game of the year and one (1) copy of the Game Boy Advance video game of the year. Approximate Retail Value (ARV) of Grand prize package is $545.00 each. Second Prizes: Ten (10) Second Prize winners will each receive one (1) copy of the 2006 Wii video game of the year, one (1) copy of the 2006 Nintendo GameCube video game of the year, one (1) copy of the 2006 Nintendo DS video game of the year and one (1) copy of the 2006 Game Boy Advance video game of the year. ARV of second prize is $165.00 each. Third Prizes: Fifty (50) Third Prize winners will each receive one (1) official Nintendo Power T-shirt. ARV of third prize is $10.00 each. Prizes won by minors will be awarded to a parent/legal guardian on their behalf. All prizes are awarded "AS IS" and WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND. Winners (and if winner is a minor his or her parent/legal guardian) may be required to execute an affidavit of eligibility and release of liability as a condition of award. Affidavit not returned to Sponsor within 20 days after notice, will result in prize forfeiture. By entering, you (and, if you are a minor, your parents or legal guardians) release Sponsor, its parent, and their affiliates, directors, officers and employees (collectively, "Released Parties") from any liability for any claims, costs, injuries, losses or damages incurred in connection with the Sweepstakes or any prize (including those related to personal injury, death, damage to property, and rights of publicity or privacy). IF YOU ARE A MINOR, YOUR PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS AGREE TO INDEMNIFY EACH OF THE RELEASED PARTIES FROM ANY SUCH CLAIMS, COSTS, INJURIES, LOSSES OR DAMAGES SUFFERED BY YOU. Entrants agree to be bound by these Rules and Sponsor's decisions, which are final. Sponsor may change these Rules and/or suspend or cancel the Sweepstakes at any time if causes beyond Sponsor's control affect the administration of the Sweepstakes or Sponsor otherwise becomes (in its sole discretion) incapable of running the Sweepstakes as planned. Any provision of these Rules deemed unenforceable will be enforced to the extent permissible, and the remainder of these Rules will remain in effect. The Sweepstakes and all accompanying materials are Copyright © 2007 by Nintendo of America Inc.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF SEASONS AND THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF AGES

GAME BOY COLOR
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
ORACLE OF AGES
GAME BOY COLOR
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
ORACLE OF SEASONS

Two stories, sixteen dungeons, and one hero—Link's two-part tale comprises the most ambitious handheld adventure of all time.

It's-a me, Talon!

PLATFORM: GAME BOY COLOR
DEVELOPER: CAPCOM/NINTENDO
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE: MAY 2001
COVERED IN ISSUES: 125, 140, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 160, 161
DAYS TO WAIT BETWEEN RELEASES: 0

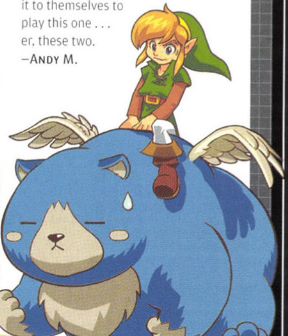
Some games exist as part of a series. Others (like the Pokémon or Mega Man Battle Network games) come in different versions. But no two games connect quite like Oracle of Seasons and Oracle of Ages, a joint effort between Nintendo and Capcom that quickly became Zelda classics.

Oracle of Seasons follows Link to the land of Holodrum, where the four seasons are in chaos, shifting from one to another randomly. The only person who can bring order—Din, the Oracle of Seasons—has been kidnapped, and it's up to Link to rescue her. To do so, he'll need to explore the far reaches of Holodrum, an underground world called Subrosia, and eight traditional Zelda-style dungeons. In addition to familiar items like the boomerang, Seasons introduces a fun device to the Zelda universe: the Rod of Seasons, which allows Link to change the seasons at will. This mechanic is really what makes Oracle of Seasons such a standout experience. You'll use the rod to traverse seasonal obstacles (such as lakes that freeze during winter and cliffs that are climbable only during summer) to reach Holodrum's new areas. It's a clever twist on a classic formula.

The game's sister title—Oracle of Ages—takes Link to Labrynna, a peaceful land being threatened by an evil sorceress. Nayru, Labrynna's oracle, is under the spell of the sorceress and wreaking havoc throughout the ages. Link must harness Nayru's power and travel through time (an ability Zelda fans should be accustomed to) to find the game's eight dungeons and save Labrynna from total darkness. While both titles exhibit a good mix of action and puzzle-solving, Ages is a bit heavier on the puzzles than Seasons, making it a more difficult game overall. And though many elements from Seasons also exist in Ages—such as the ability to ride animals—it's a distinctly different game with its own feel.

While Seasons and Ages are solid Zelda titles on their own, together they are a truly unforgettable experience. After you complete one game (it doesn't matter which one you start with), you can enter a password in the other game to transform the experience into a continuation of the first game. There are endless items to collect and secrets to discover using the password-linking feature—but the greatest event comes after you complete both games. You'll learn that Gannon was behind the turmoil in both Holodrum and Labrynna, and you must defeat him to save Princess Zelda. It's an epic ending to a massive adventure like no other. Zelda fans owe it to themselves to play this one . . . er, these two.

—ANDY M.



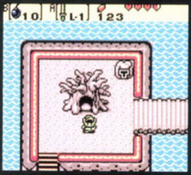
Though not quite as elegant as Epona, Moosh still gets the job done.

Have a favorite classic game you'd like to see revisited?
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Playback.
pulse@nintendopower.com

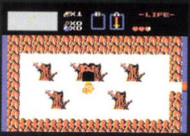
SEASONS CHANGE

As if two games weren't enough, Nintendo and Capcom originally intended the Oracle of Seasons/Oracle of Ages project to be a trilogy. Each chapter of the trilogy was going to be named after a respective piece of the Triforce: Widsom, Courage, and Power. It's even rumored that the trilogy was supposed to include a remake of The Legend of Zelda. While this never came to be, there are many elements in Oracle of Seasons that pay homage to the NES classic, including six of the eight dungeon bosses.

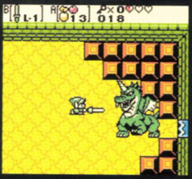
ORACLE OF SEASONS



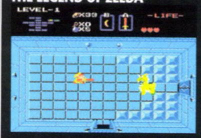
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA



ORACLE OF SEASONS

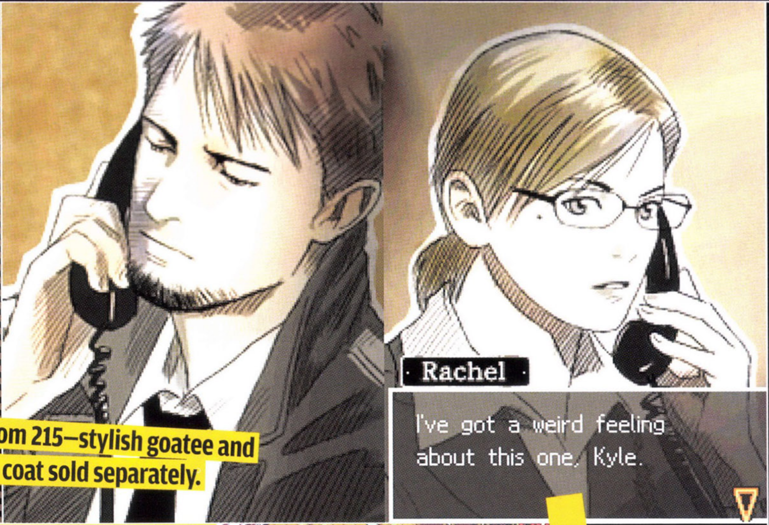


THE LEGEND OF ZELDA



REVIEWS

In-depth reviews of the latest games



Rachel

I've got a weird feeling about this one, Kyle.

Hotel Dusk: Room 215—stylish goatee and trench coat sold separately.

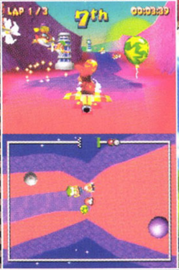
Cancer 3
Setzer 2430
Cyan 2218
Shadow 3028
Celes 2236

LIFE
ENE
TRE

Lunar Knights: Vampire Hunter, Izuna: Legend of the Unemployed Ninja, and more.

87

It's called FINAL FANTASY VI, but you may know it as FINAL FANTASY III. We call it a classic.



LAP 1/3
7th
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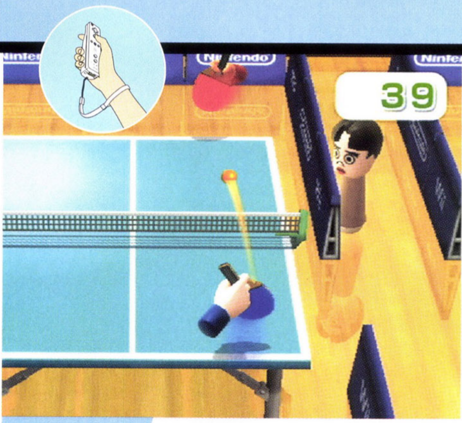
87

N64 sensation Diddy Kong Racing hits the DS running.

86

The emphasis in Wii Play is multiplayer action—so much so that it comes with a remote.



THE SHALLOW END

Wii LITE

Wii PLAY

RATING: 7.0

PLATFORM: Wii
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
ESRB: EVERYONE

All of the games in the Wii collection sport a surface-level cleverness that makes them brilliant demos of what the Wii means for the future of game design, but only a few of them offer enough depth for repeated visits. On the other hand, it's a great way to show off your console to a non-gamer, and you needed that extra remote anyway, right? Here are the highlights of the collection:

Shooting Range: The Wii remote is very effective for light gun games—the same way a flamethrower is very effective for removing paint. This game is a stone groove the first few times you play it, but it has only four short levels.

Table Tennis: Fun, subtle, and a lot like an actual game of table tennis. So why not make it into an actual game of table tennis? Why make it a single rally that stops when you get to 100?

Laser Hockey: This neon variation on Pong is infinitely more fun than it has any right to be. The remote offers near-complete control over your paddle, which allows for complex strategies and furiously fast, two-player gameplay.

Billiards: This 9-ball game has a sledgehammer break and long-lasting appeal. It's probably the best video-game version of billiards I've played, thanks to its clever use of the Wii remote.

Charge!: Easily the best-ever cow racing game to feature yarn-based environments. It's another game in the collection that's a lot of fun for a very limited time.

Tanks!: This slight, isometric-view variation on Combat for the Atari 2600 boasts innovative targeting controls that I would love to see more of in future games.
—DREW W.

P1
326
Bonus

The fish aren't dead, kids. They're only sleeping.

WRITERS' BLOCK

WHAT NP AWARDS NOMINEE DO YOU CHAMPION?

The NP Awards nominations are in for the games of 2006 (see page 74). We asked our reviewers what games they'd like to make sure voters don't forget.

CHRIS HOFFMAN

Will I vote for New Super Mario Bros, Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin, or Elite Beat Agents for DS game of the year? It's too close to call. At least the sound category is easy: Spyro all the way.

CHRIS SHEPPERD

This might be my last opportunity to beat a dead horse, but Drill Dozer combined good gameplay with a solid story and fun characters, and still didn't get enough attention. Bah!

ANDY MYERS

It's unforgivable that Electroplankton—the most original gaming experience of '06—was nominated only once. It will be an all-out travesty if it does not take home the award.

GEORGE SINFIELD

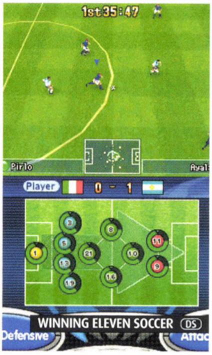
The DS Game of the Year competition is fierce. Any of the nominees could take the prize but my vote's for Elite Beat Agents. It's use of the touch screen, art, and humor should inspire a slew of imitators.

STEVE THOMASON

I'm going to have to join Mr. Shepperd in putting the boots to that deceased equine. Drill Dozer was a tragically overlooked gem that provided the kind of old-school fun we just don't get enough of anymore.

DREW WILLIAMS

Elite Beat Agents integrated comix conventions, music, and straight-up weirdness to great effect. It was like a cleansing rain after wading through a trash heap of games based on bad cartoons. Vote for it!

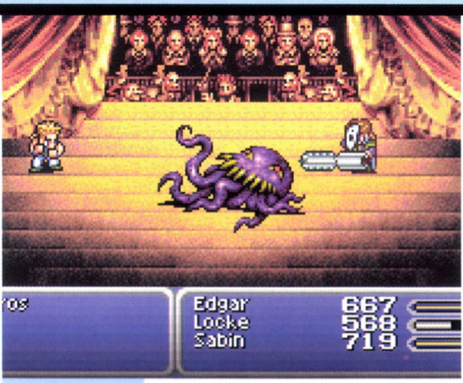


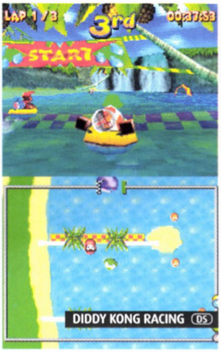
WINNING ELEVEN PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2007

RATING: 6.5

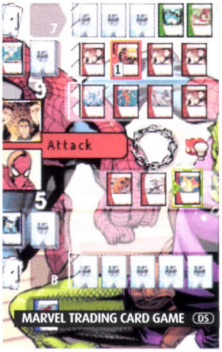
PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
ESRB: EVERYONE

If EA didn't have its soccer FIFA-dom already firmly established on Nintendo handhelds, Winning Eleven's crossover to the DS would be bigger news. It's not that Konami's own longstanding soccer franchise has any glaring weaknesses. It's just that EA got there first, and with bigger guns. While EA's series makes good use of its FIFA license and the FIFA World Cup, Winning Eleven's World Tour just feels generic. The upshot is that it emphasizes building your own fictional team by accumulating members of teams that you defeat. Winning Eleven's play control and graphics are on par with FIFA 07 for the DS and it does make better use of the DS touch screen, both through a device that allows you to adjust your team's aggressiveness on the fly and through net-zone selection for penalty kicks. It also offers Wi-Fi play via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. Even though it doesn't bring you scores of official international teams in the way that FIFA 07 does, it does let you play against other Winning Eleven players all over the world. —GEORGE S.





DIDDY KONG RACING (DS)



MARVEL TRADING CARD GAME (DS)

SENSATIONAL SIX

ROLE-PLAYING PERFECTION

FINAL FANTASY VI ADVANCE

RATING: 9.5

PLATFORM: **Game Boy Advance**
PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Square Enix/Tose**
ESRB: **Everyone 10+**

Way back in 1994 (when it was called FINAL FANTASY III and on Super NES), FINAL FANTASY VI demonstrated to me and countless others just how compelling a role-playing game could be. Between an epic story, a diverse cast of characters, a super-refined battle system, and graphics and music that pushed the hardware to the max, the title set a new standard in its genre. And more than a decade later, the game holds up amazingly well now that it's on the GBA in the form of FINAL FANTASY VI Advance.

From the controls to the flexible magic system, the game does almost everything right, but topping the list is the inclusion of 14 distinct playable characters. Each one brings something new to the adventure, from the traditional (the ability to steal from enemies) to the unique (attacks via slot machine or fighting-game-style button commands), and all of them are viable team members, most with intriguing backstories and side quests. The dramatic plot brings the heroes together in a deep but non-convoluted tale that ranks among the best of any RPG, and the detailed visuals translate flawlessly to handheld form. Fanatical gamers will appreciate how new content (a few optional bosses and a bonus dungeon) adds even more play value to the incredible quest, while RPG newcomers will dig the forgiving difficulty, which lets you keep accumulated experience (but not money or ability points) when you die.

My two minor complaints are that there's some occasional slowdown, and that the music isn't quite as good as it was on the SNES; it still sounds great considering the GBA's sound capabilities, but the newly added rockin' riffs in some tracks seem out of place. These are small prices to pay, however, for getting one of the most awesome achievements in role-playing delivered in portable form. FINAL FANTASY VI Advance is as close to a perfect RPG as you're going to find on any system. —**Chris H.**

DIDDY KONG RACING DS

RATING: 7.5

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **Nintendo**
DEVELOPER: **Rare**
ESRB: **Everyone**

Though it was released in the shadow of racing giant Mario Kart 64, Diddy Kong Racing made its own imprint on the kart genre in 1997 with its inclusion of adventure-gaming elements and three types of racing vehicles (cars, planes, and hovercraft). Ten years later, the Rare classic is taking a victory lap on the Nintendo DS with both subtle and obvious changes. Among the former are a rejiggering of the racing lineup (Conker and Banjo have left in favor of Kong siblings Tiny and Daisy) and the removal of speed-boosting bananas. Bigger differences incorporate the DS touch screen. Out are the course-revisiting Silver Coin challenges. In are magic-carpet rides that have you popping balloons with taps of the stylus. Though the shooting-gallery play mechanic works, moving the camera with stylus slices is a drag. Also after you've rocketed out in front of your opponents with a stylus move, you'll wish that you had a third hand to put away the stylus while your other hands are busy manipulating the controls.

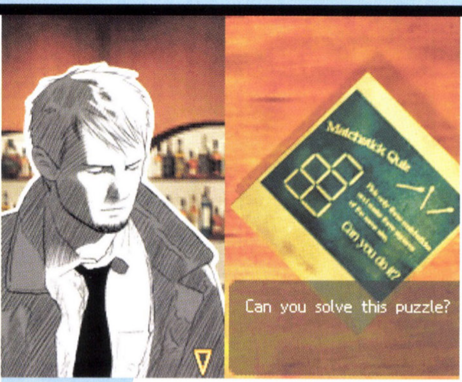
Though recent street racers have incorporated an overworld from which racing events branch, the concept was new in '97. You gain entry to more races with each victory. If you don't meet the winning conditions (usually placing first), you are kicked out and forced to re-enter the race (a retry-or-quit option would have saved time). The game looks even better than it did on the N64, and the addition of a touch-screen map is a real boon. Also welcome is a Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection link that allows you to face off with racers worldwide. Like its predecessor, Diddy Kong Racing DS has a Mario Kart game to compete with, but also enough unique features to make it a kart-racing contender. —**George S.**

MARVEL TRADING CARD GAME

RATING: 4.0

PLATFORM: **Nintendo DS**
PUBLISHER: **Konami**
DEVELOPER: **Konami**
ESRB: **Teen**

The extensive and well-defined Marvel universe seems well-fit for a good trading-card game, but never has a cool concept been so utterly obliterated by the burden of too much minutiae. Marvel Trading Card Game's voluminous stack of cryptic rules, absolutely brutal learning curve, and terrible in-game tutorial make it virtually impossible to play. Veterans of Upper Deck's "Vs. System" will have a head start in comprehending the dizzyingly complex rule set, but not much of one. Those of you with Stephen Hawking-esque IQs and zenlike patience might be able to stick it out and find a modestly worthwhile experience here—even through the game's many frustrations you can see glimpses of quality Marvel fan-service and deep strategy—but in all likelihood, you'll put it down long before you get to that point. —**Chris S.**



TOUCH OF GRAY

STAY THE NIGHT

HOTEL DUSK: ROOM 215

RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **CING**
ESRB: **TEEN**

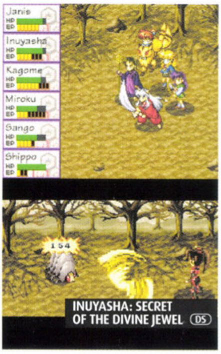
The developers of Hotel Dusk clearly envisioned this innovative DS title to be more of an interactive novel than a game, and in this regard it has succeeded greatly; judged strictly on its ability to tell a good mystery story it holds up quite well. The plot weaves evenly through the right number of well-defined characters—any more voices and you probably wouldn't be able to keep the actors straight. Along the way to a suspenseful climax, the story deliberately turns you down some fun dead ends to throw you off. The writing is strong throughout, although you might expect more character development that parallels the story arc, particularly from the main character; he remains sort of a jerk even to those who eventually help him unravel the mystery. The film-noir themes of isolation, betrayal, and lack of resolution match outstandingly with the dirty, remote hotel and the seedy people within it. Plus the jittery, shades-of-grey character design punctuates the noir motif effectively.

From a straight gameplay point of view, however, the delivery is a little disappointing. The vast majority of the gameplay consists of simply hoofing from one location in the hotel to another to shake information out of the residents and employees. The ballyhooed branching conversation trees turn out to be somewhat overrated—you can occasionally misspeak and get kicked out of the hotel (and have to start over from a checkpoint), but otherwise you're kept within a narrow story path. The game relies heavily on conversation triggers—you may knock on a door and get no response, walk 10 feet down the hall and talk to somebody else, then return to the first door and find somebody there. It's a pitfall that could be remedied with placeholder events at the very least.

Such issues notwithstanding, Hotel Dusk's intriguing story and sinister themes are well worth the time. Impatient gamers looking for a little more action may want to look elsewhere, but they'll do so at the risk of missing out on yet another groundbreaking DS title. —CHRIS S.

Shakugan Cavern
HP
SP
Lv.29

IZUNA: LEGEND OF THE UNEMPLOYED NINJA (DS)



INUYASHA: SECRET OF THE DIVINE JEWEL (DS)

IZUNA: LEGEND OF THE UNEMPLOYED NINJA

RATING: 6.5

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **ATLUS**
DEVELOPER: **SUCCESS/NINJA STUDIO**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

Atlus's entourage of quirky games gets bigger with Izuna: Legend of the Unemployed Ninja, which follows the story of a young, smart-alecky ninja who's stuck in a small town with nothing to do. Out of sheer boredom, she steals a sacred relic and angers the nearby gods, who in turn put a curse on everyone in the village. But due to her unpleasant demeanor, Izuna is somehow immune to the curse, and decides to wage war against the gods. Like in many Atlus games, the dialogue and character design have a strong anime influence, and are executed very well. But while the story is not at all predictable, the gameplay most definitely is. Izuna's adventure plays out as a straight-up action-RPG in which you'll control the antihero in top-down view, hacking and slashing your way through endless randomized dungeons.

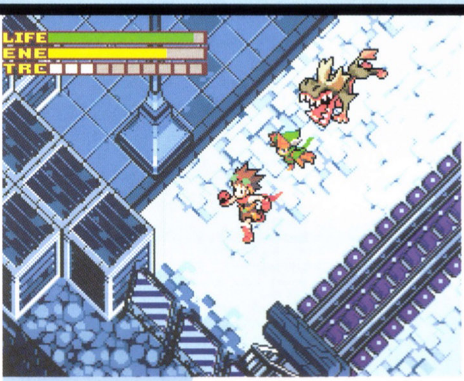
Though the game has much in common with other dungeon crawls (such as recently released Pokémon Mystery Dungeon), it also has features that set it apart. The most interesting of these is the ability to alter the weapons you've collected by combining them with items. This system has a ton of possible outcomes, but it isn't terribly useful in the context of actual gameplay. For the most part, the game stays true to its dungeon-hacking roots—it's long, repetitive, and unforgiving. You'll be thrown into the deep end right at the start, and will probably have to play each dungeon over and over again to master it. To some this may not sound like fun, but to fans of challenging dungeon crawls—or to those who are simply gluttons for punishment—Izuna will likely bring many hours of enjoyment.
—ANDY M.

INUYASHA: SECRET OF THE DIVINE JEWEL

RATING: 6.0

PLATFORM: **NINTENDO DS**
PUBLISHER: **NAMCO BANDAI**
DEVELOPER: **FRONTIER GROOVE**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

As anime-inspired video games go, InuYasha: Secret of the Divine Jewel is a perfectly acceptable piece of fan exploitation that should temporarily sate the dog-boy-loving contingent of otaku nation, then completely vanish from the radar. It's a decent enough RPG with dull turn-based combat, story integration and item-management conventions that were state-of-the-art in 1992. The game does make good use of the touch pad (you never really need to use any buttons), but the uninspired, fragmented environments and repetitive, far-too-frequent random battles hark back to the stone age of the genre. Note to InuYasha fans: you will need to endure a lengthy introductory journey with many tedious battles before you can use characters that you actually recognize. —DREW W.



THE FUN IS IN YOUR HAND

MOON SHINE

LUNAR KNIGHTS

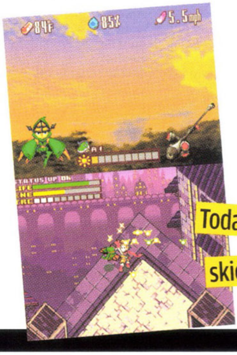
RATING: 8.0

PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
DEVELOPER: KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS
ESRB: EVERYONE 10+

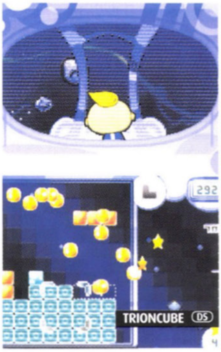
First Castlevania and now this; Konami is on quite a roll when it comes to DS games about hunting vampires. Lunar Knights, the first title from Kojima Productions for the dual-screened handheld, is a supremely polished action-RPG in which you slay the bloodsuckers and their monstrous minions with two very different protagonists. The mysterious swordsman Lucian slices through enemies with his dark blade, while gunslinger Aaron uses a variety of firearms to dispatch foes. You can switch between the two heroes on the fly, and their disparate gameplay styles prevent the battle-heavy adventure from becoming excessively repetitive (though a bit more puzzle-solving and exploration would have helped, as well).

As one might expect from the development team behind Metal Gear Solid, the production values in Lunar Knights are through the roof. All of the environments are drawn in exquisite detail, frequent voice samples bring the characters to life, and stunning full-motion-animation cut-scenes advance a compelling narrative (and are sprinkled liberally throughout the entire game, not just the beginning and end). It's absolutely amazing how much the developers were able to cram into that little game card, and the result sets a new standard for the DS in terms of presentation.

But Lunar Knights' beauty runs more than skin-deep: The ability to upgrade weapons and imbue them with different elemental powers, simple-yet-entertaining 3-D space-shooting segments between levels, and changing weather conditions that influence multiple facets of the game (this is the spiritual successor to Boktai, after all) round out a truly impressive package that you can sink your teeth into. —STEVE T.



Today's forecast calls for sunny skies and dead vampires.



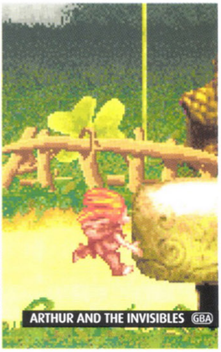
TRIONCUBE DS

TRIONCUBE

RATING: 5.5

PLATFORM: NINTENDO DS
PUBLISHER: NAMCO BANDAI
DEVELOPER: NAMCO
ESRB: EVERYONE

The alternate name for falling-piece puzzler Trioncube could be My First Tetris. Instead of the classic's four-block pieces, the kid-friendly Trioncube showers the playing field with three-block pieces, challenging you to construct three-by-three cubes, rather than Tetris's cross-field lines. Your score increases exponentially as you can chain together cube completions with consecutive pieces. A bracket on the target block pile acts as a visual aid, letting you know if the falling piece will add to the chain in its current orientation, taking almost all of the challenge out of cube construction. Story mode offers 45 levels in which the goal is to propel the penguin-shape *Penko* using the fuel that the cubes produce. Level objectives vary slightly, but the solution is always to complete cubes as quickly as possible, sometimes dealing with space junk; sometimes not. Strangely, space junk often turns out to be a boon allowing you to complete cube combinations in a hurry, making the outcome swing from near defeat to victory in an instant. Arcade mode, Endless mode and extensive multiplayer features (including DS download play) give the game depth beyond the two to three hours that it takes to finish the story. —GEORGE S.



ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES GBA

ALSO THIS MONTH

Atari's **Arthur and the Invisibles** (DS and GBA) treads into WarioWare territory by doling out collections of microgames that feature characters from the recent film. The DS game's activities make use of the handheld's touch screen and microphone. . . . **Totally Spies! 2: Undercover** (DS and GBA), also from Atari, puts the Totally Spies! trio into 20 levels of superspy action, including lots of driving and exploration. . . . Speaking of driving, Activision's **Shrek Smash n' Crash Racing** (GCN, GBA) and The Game Factory's **Cartoon Network Racing** (DS) both give us kart-racing thrills featuring characters from their respective properties. . . . Konami's **Yu-Gi-Oh! Spirit Caller** (DS) covers a new year at the GX Academy with customizable characters and 1,400 Yu-Gi-Oh! cards. . . . **Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends** (GBA) from Crave lets you guide Mac and Bloo in a colorful side-scrolling tour around the house. . . . Graffiti Entertainment's **Mazes of Fate** (GBA) is a simplified first-person-perspective RPG with three playable characters and a far-reaching story. . . . **Rafa Nadal Tennis** (DS) from Codemasters serves up touch-controlled tennis. You draw the path of the ball with your stylus and Nadal hits it. . . . **Ghost Rider** (GBA) from 2K Games starts where the film ends, offering driving levels on the Hell Cycle and fighting sections using the Marvel Comics character's Hellfire chain and shotgun.

[ARCHIVE]

REMOTE POSSIBILITIES

The latest batch of Wii titles to enter the archive demonstrates the width and breadth of Wii motion control. WarioWare: Smooth Moves (9.0) takes advantage of the remote's tilting and pointing functionality by having players pose and contort in 19 forms. Konami's Elebits (7.5) is a point-and-shoot wonder that turns the remote into a tractor beam and Super Swing Golf (7.5) takes the remote-is-a-golf-club idea from Wii Sports and expands it into a full-scale game. We can't wait to see where Wii control goes from here.

SCORES REFLECT INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS' OPINIONS.
• INDICATES WI-FI COMPATIBLE

Wii				
The Ant Bully	N/A	Midway	211	E10+
Avatar: The Last Airbender	N/A	THQ	211	E10+
The Barnyard	N/A	THQ	211	E10+
Call of Duty 3	6.5	Activision	211	T
Cars	N/A	THQ	211	E
Chicken Little: Ace in Action	7.0	Buena Vista	212	E10+
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2	7.0	Atari	211	T
Elebits	7.5	Konami	212	E
Excite Truck	8.5	Nintendo	211	E
Far Cry: Vengeance	4.0	Ubisoft	212	M
The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy	N/A	Midway	211	E10+
GT Pro Series	5.0	Ubisoft	211	E
Happy Feet	4.5	Midway	211	E
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	N/A	Sierra	212	E10+
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	9.5	Nintendo	211	T
Madden NFL 07	8.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	8.0	Activision	211	T
Metal Slug Anthology	8.0	SNK Playmore USA	211	T
Monster 4x4: World Circuit	6.5	Ubisoft	211	E
Need for Speed: Carbon	6.0	Electronic Arts	212	E10+
Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E10+
Rampage: Total Destruction	6.5	Midway	211	E10+
Rapala Tournament Fishing	N/A	Activision	212	E
Rayman Raving Rabbids	7.5	Ubisoft	211	E
Red Steel	8.0	Ubisoft	211	T
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	7.0	THQ	211	E
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Blitz	8.5	Sega	211	E
Super Swing Golf	7.5	Tecmo	212	E
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent	6.0	Ubisoft	211	M
Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam	7.5	Activision	212	E10+
Trauma Center: Second Opinion	8.5	Atlus	211	T
WarioWare: Smooth Moves	9.0	Nintendo	212	E
Wii Sports	8.0, 8.5	Nintendo	211	E
World Series of Poker: Tournament of Champions	N/A	Activision	212	T
NINTENDO GAMECUBE				
2006 FIFA World Cup	7.5	Electronic Arts	204	E
American Chopper 2: Full Throttle	5.0	Activision	201	T
The Ant Bully	5.0	Midway	208	E10+
Avatar: The Last Airbender	7.0	THQ	210	E
The Barnyard	6.0	THQ	207	E10+
Baten Kaitos Origins	8.0	Nintendo	209	T
Bionicle Heroes	5.0	Eidos	211	E10+
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	E
Cars	6.5	THQ	206	E
Chibi-Robo	8.0	Nintendo	201	E10+
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
FIFA 07	8.0	Electronic Arts	210	E
FIFA Street 2	7.0	Electronic Arts	203	E
Flushed Away	6.5	D3PA	210	E
The Grim Adventures of Billy and Mandy	6.5	Midway	210	E10+
Happy Feet	N/A	Midway	211	E
Harvest Moon: Magical Melody	9.0,9.5	Natsume	203	E
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	5.0	Vivendi	203	E10+
Kao the Kangaroo: Round 2	2.5	Atari	203	E
The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning	5.5	Sierra	209	E10+
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	9.5	Nintendo	212	T
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy	7.5	LucasArts	209	E10+
Madden NFL 07	9.0	Electronic Arts	208	E
Major League Baseball 2K6	7.0, 6.5,6.0	2K Sports	205	E
Monster House	6.5	THQ	207	E10+
Naruto: Clash of Ninja	7.0	Tomy/D3PA	203	T
Naruto: Clash of Ninja 2	7.5	Tomy/D3PA	210	T
Need For Speed: Carbon	7.5	Electronic Arts	211	E10+
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
Odama	8.5	Nintendo	203	E10+
One Piece: Grand Adventure	5.5	Namco Bandai	208	T
One Piece: Pirates' Carnival	5.5	Namco Bandai	209	E
Open Season	8.0	Ubisoft	209	E10+
Over the Hedge	6.0	Activision	205	E10+
Pac-Man World Rally	5.5	Namco Bandai	208	E
Rampage: Total Destruction	6.5	Midway	204	E10+
The Sims 2 Pets	6.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
Sonic Riders	8.0	Sega	203	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	8.5	THQ	210	E
Super Monkey Ball Adventure	5.5	Nintendo	208	E
Teen Titans	6.0	Majesco	204	E10+
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Double Agent	4.5	Ubisoft	210	M
Tomb Raider: Legend	7.5	Eidos	211	T
X-Men: The Official Game	6.5	Activision	205	T
NINTENDO DS				
2006 FIFA World Cup	7.0	Electronic Arts	204	E
Age of Empires: The Age of Kings	8.0	Majesco	201	E10+
Alex Rider: Stormbreaker	4.5	THQ	208	T
Avatar: The Last Airbender	6.5	THQ	210	E
Bionicle Heroes	N/A	Eidos	211	T
Blades of Thunder 2	4.5	Summitsoft	201	E10+
• Bomberman Land Touch!	7.0	Atlus	211	E
Brain Boost: Beta Wave	N/A	Majesco	212	E
Brain Boost: Gamma Wave	N/A	Majesco	212	E
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	E
Break 'Em All	7.0	D3PA	206	E
Bubble Bobble Revolution	6.0	Codemasters	208	E
Cars	5.5	THQ	206	E
• Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin	9.0	Konami	211	T
Catz	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E
Charlotte's Web	6.0	Sega	211	E
Chicken Little: Ace in Action	6.5	Buena Vista	210	E
Children of Mana	6.5	Nintendo	210	E10+
• Clubhouse Games	7.0	Nintendo	209	E
• Contact	6.5	Atlus	209	E10+
Cooking Mama	7.0	Majesco	209	E
Crash Boom Bang!	4.0	Sierra	209	E
Deep Labyrinth	6.0	Atlus	208	E10+
• Digimon World DS	N/A	Namco Bandai	212	E
Dino Master	5.5	Majesco	205	E
Disney's American Dragon: Jake Long—Attack of the Dark Dragon	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Dogz	N/A	Ubisoft	211	E
Dragon quest Heroes: Rocket Slime	9.0	Square Enix	208	E
Elite Beat Agents	9.5	Nintendo	210	E10+
Eragon	N/A	Nintendo	211	T
FIFA 07	N/A	Electronic Arts	210	E
FIFA Street 2	6.0	Electronic Arts	203	E
• Final Fantasy III	8.0	Square Enix	211	E10+
Finding Nemo: Escape to the Big Blue	5.0	THQ	202	E
Flushed Away	N/A	D3PA	210	E
Freedom Wings	6.0	Natsume	207	E10+
Fullmetal Alchemist: Dual Sympathy	7.0	Destineer	212	T
Golden Nugget Casino DS	6.5	Majesco	201	T
Greg Hastings' Tournament Paintball Max'd	N/A	Activision	201	E10+
Guilty Gear Dust Strikers	7.0	Majesco	204	T
Gunpey DS	6.5	Namco BAndai	210	E
Harlem Globetrotters World Tour	N/A	DSI	211	E
Harvest Moon DS	6.0	Natsume	208	E
Hi Hi Puffy Amiyumi: The Genie and the Amp	4.5	D3PA	206	E10+

REVIEWER NOTES

SUPER MONEY BALL: BANANA BLITZ

Opinions on Wii's first Monkey Ball foray are all over the map, but the negatrons are simply wrong on this one. Banana Blitz completely reinvigorates the franchise with perfect motion control, challenging new courses, and fun boss battles. The minigames leave a bit to be desired, but the main story mode is by far the best in the series. Once you've experienced Monkey Ball on Wii, there's simply no going back.
—Andy M.

>EXCITE TRUCK

Excite Truck's original game structure and white-knuckle sense of speed on Wii hooked me in after the first race, but I began to lose interest quickly due to the limited number of courses and the scant power-ups.

—Chris S.

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

If you're in the market for top-notch adventure, don't put that GameCube away just yet. The latest exploits of buxom heroine Lara Croft are among the best you'll find on the lunch-box-shaped console, and return the long-running Tomb Raider franchise to its former glory. After suffering through years of archaic, grid-based controls, Lara moves through Legend's breathtaking environments with an agility and grace befitting an icon of her stature. —Steve T.

Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	4.0	Vivendi	203	E
Justic League Heroes	3.0	Warner Bros.Interactive	210	E10+
Kirby: Squeak Squad	7.5	Nintendo	212	E
• Konductra	N/A	O~3	208	E
The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning	N/A	Sierra	209	E
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy	4.5	LucasArts	209	E
• LostMagic	8.0, 7.0	Ubisoft	204	E
Madden NFL 07	7.5	Electronic Arts	208	E
Mage Knight: Destiny's Soldier	N/A	Namco Bandai	210	E10+
Magical Starsign	7.0	Nintendo	210	E
Magnetica	8.0	Nintendo	205	E
Mario Hoops 3-on-3	7.5	Nintendo	209	E
• Mario Vs. Donkey Kong 2: March of the Minis	7.5	Nintendo	209	E
MechAssault: Phantom War	8.0	Majesco	209	T
Mega Man ZX	8.5	Capcom	208	E
• Metroid Prime Hunters	8.5, 8.0	Nintendo	203	T
Micro Machines V4	N/A	Codemasters	211	E
Mini RC Rally	N/A	Summitsoft	204	E
Monster Bomber	N/A	Majesco	212	E
Monster House	5.5	THQ	207	E
My Frogger: Toy Trials	N/A	Konami	211	E
Nacho Libre	7.0	Majesco	210	E10+
Need For Speed: Carbon	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
New Super Mario Bros.	9.5,9.5,9.5,9.5	Nintendo	205	E
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
• Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	209	E
Over the Hedge	6.0	Activision	205	E
Over the Hedge: Hammy Goes Nuts	N/A	Activision	210	E
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney Justice for All	9.0	Capcom	212	T
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	6.0	Buena Vista	206	T
Point Blank DS	6.0	Namco Bandai	206	E10+
Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Blue Rescue Team	8.0	Nintendo	209	E
Pokémon Ranger	7.0	Nintendo	210	E
Pokémon Trozei	8.5	Nintendo	202	E
Rainbow Islands Revolution	4.5	Codemasters	208	E
Resident Evil: Deadly Silence	8.5	Capcom	202	M
The Rub Rabbits!	8.0	Sega	201	T
Scooby-Doo! Who's Watching Who?	6.5	THQ	210	E
The Sims 2 Pets	5.5	Electronic Arts	211	E
Spider-Man: Battle for New York	6.0	Activision	212	E10+
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	N/A	THQ	210	E
• Star Fox Command	9.5	Nintendo	208	E10+
Star Trek: Tactical Assault	5.5	Bethesda	210	E
Star Wars: Lethal Alliance	7.0	Ubisoft	212	E10+
The Suite Life of Zack & Cody	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Super Black Bass Fishing	4.5	Majesco	204	E
Super Monkey Ball: Touch & Roll	6.5, 7.5	Sega	201	E
Super Princess Peach	7.5	Nintendo	202	E
Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop	5.0	Bandai	201	E
Tao's Adventure: Curse of the Demon Seal	6.0	Konami	203	E
• Tenchu: Dark Secret	5.0	Nintendo	208	T
• Tetris DS	9.5	Nintendo	203	E
That's So Raven: Psychic on the Scene	N/A	Buena Vista	210	E
Tom and Jerry Tales	N/A	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E
Tamagotchi Connection: Cornershop 2	N/A	Namco Bandai	211	E
Tomb Raider: Legend	4.5	Eidos	210	T
• Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam	7.5	Activision	211	E
Top Gun	4.0	Mastiff	202	E10+
Touch Detective	6.0	Atlus	210	E10+
True Swing Golf	8.0	Nintendo	201	E
Worms: Open Warfare	7.0	THQ	202	E10+
X-Men: The Official Game	7.0	Activision	205	E10+
Xiaolin Showdown	5.0	Konami	212	E
Yoshi's Island DS	8.0	Nintendo	211	E
GAME BOY ADVANCE				
2006 FIFA World Cup	7.5	Electronic Arts	204	E
Alex Rider: Stormbreaker	N/A	THQ	208	E10+
The Ant Bully	N/A	Midway	208	E
Avatar: The Last Airbender	N/A	THQ	210	E
Babar to the Rescue	N/A	THe Game Factory	206	E
Backyard Baseball 2007	3.5	Atari	204	E
Backyard Basketball 2007	N/A	Atari	209	E
The Barnyard	6.5	THQ	207	E
Battle B-Daman	6.5	Atlus	207	E
Battle B-Daman: Fire Spirits!	6.5	Atlus	210	E
Bionicle Heroes	N/A	Eidos	211	E
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	N/A	THQ	210	E
Cabbage Patch Kids: The Patch Puppy Rescue	N/A	D3PA	204	E
Capcom Classics Mini Mix	7.5	Capcom	209	T
Cars	6.5	THQ	206	E
Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance/ Aria of Sorrow Double Pack	9.0	Konami	202	T
Catz	N/A	Ubisoft	204	E
The Cheetah Girls	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Curious George	7.0	Namco	202	E
Disney's American Dragon: Jake Long—Rise of the Huntsclan	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E10+
Dr. Sudoku	6.0	Mastiff	203	E
Dragon Ball: Advanced Adventure	7.0	Atari	203	E10+
Drill Dozer	9.0	Nintendo	201	E
Eragon	N/A	Nintendo	211	E10+
FIFA 07	N/A	Electronic Arts	210	E
Final Fantasy V Advance	8.5	Nintendo	210	E
Flushed Away	N/A	D3PA	210	E
Games Explosion!	4.0	THQ	208	E
Garfield and His Nine Lives	5.0	American Game Factory	204	E
Harlem Globetrotters World Tour	N/A	DSI	211	E
Ice Age 2: The Meltdown	4.0	Vivendi	203	E
Justic League Heroes: The Flash	5.5	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E10+
The Land Before Time: Into the Mysterious Beyond	N/A	American Game Factory	201	E
The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning	N/A	Sierra	209	E
LEGO *Star Wars* II: The Original Trilogy	N/A	LucasArts	209	E
Let's Ride! Dreamer	N/A	THQ	203	E
Madden NFL 07	7.0	Electronic Arts	208	E
Majesco's Sports Pack	N/A	Majesco	201	E10+
Mega Man Battle Network 6: Cybeast Gregar & Cybeast Falzar	7.5	Capcom	206	E
Miss Spider's Harvest Time Hop & Fly	N/A	The Game Factory	206	E
Monster House	5.0	THQ	207	E
Naruto: Ninja Council	4.0	Tomy/D3PA	203	E10+
Naruto: Ninja Council 2	5.5	Tomy/D3PA	210	E10+
Need For Speed: Carbon	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
Nicktoons: Battle for Volcano Island	N/A	THQ	210	E
Open Season	N/A	Ubisoft	209	E
Over the Hedge	3.5	Activision	205	E
Over the Hedge: Hammy Goes Nuts	N/A	Activision	210	E
Paws & Claws Resort	N/A	THQ	203	E
Phil of the Future	N/A	Buena Vista	208	E
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	7.5	Buena Vista	206	E10+
Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Red Rescue Team	8.0	Nintendo	209	E
Polarium Advance	N/A	Atlus	212	E
The Santa Clause 3	N/A	Buena Vista	209	E
The Sims 2 Pets	N/A	Electronic Arts	211	E
Sonic the Hedghog Genesis	6.0	Sega	211	E
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature from the Krusty Krab	N/A	THQ	210	E
SRS: Street Racing Syndicate	5.5	Destination	201	T
Sudoku Fever	4.0	Global Star	202	E
Sudoku Mania	N/A	UFO Interactive	206	E
Summon Night: Swordcraft Story	8.0	Atlus	207	E10+
Summon Night: Swordcraft Story 2	8.0	Atlus	210	E10+
Super Robot Taisen: Original Generation	6.5	Atlus	207	T
Super Robot Taisen: Original Generation 2	7.0	Atlus	211	T
Tales of Phantasia	8.5	Nintendo	202	E10+
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Double Pack	N/A	Konami	206	E
Tom and Jerry Tales	N/A	Warner Bros. Interactive	210	E
Tomb Raider: Legend	N/A	Eidos	210	T
Tony Hawk's Downhill Jam	7.5	Activision	211	E
Totally Spies!	5.5	Atari	201	E
The Tower SP	7.0	Sega	203	E
The Wild	N/A	Buena Vista	204	E
X-Men: The Official Game	3.5	Activision	205	E10+
Yggdra Union	7.5	Atlus	211	T
Yu-Gi-Oh! GX Duel Academy	6.0	Konami	201	E
Yu-Gi-Oh! Ultimate Masters—World Championship Tournament 2006	6.0	Konami	204	E

>RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS Wii

A classic example of a short development cycle yielding unrealized potential, Rabbids still scores for me because it's one of the few games ever that's made me laugh.

—Drew W.

TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, consider the SSX series sincerely flattered by Downhill Jam, right down to the sassy archetypal characters, full contact with other racers, and the cartoonish graphics. Of course, what SSX doesn't have—yet—is Wii control. By the time you get to the bottom of the first hill, the game's remote-tilting control scheme will seem like the only way to steer. Downhill racing isn't a new idea, but motion control makes it fresh. —George S.

>CHIBI-ROBO

Nintendo recently stopped shipping the quirky, pint-sized adventures of Chibi-Robo, so if you have any interest in experiencing the charming tale of a do-gooding robot, get the game now before it's too late.

—Chris H.

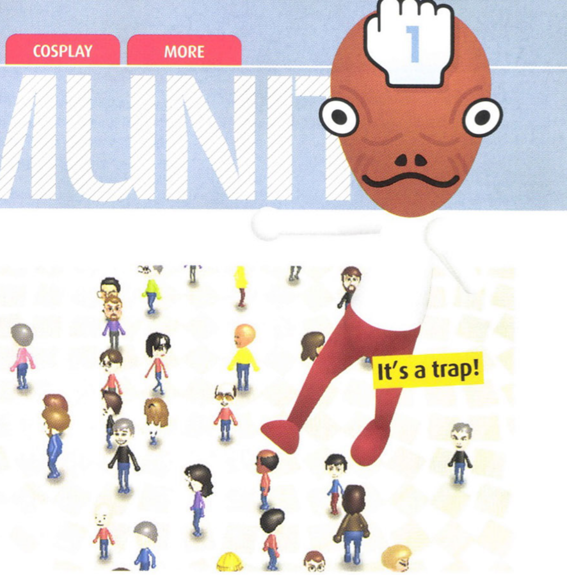
need to get all of them out
the others can regenera

TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION

I think I prefer the tactile sensation of playing the original Trauma Center: Under the Knife on DS, but Second Opinion on Wii is completely worthwhile as well. The repurposed stages feel new thanks to the Wii controls, and the all-new levels are especially enjoyable—although the game would have been even better with full voiceovers and anime cut-scenes. Trauma Center's not your typical video game, but isn't that what Wii's all about? —Chris H.

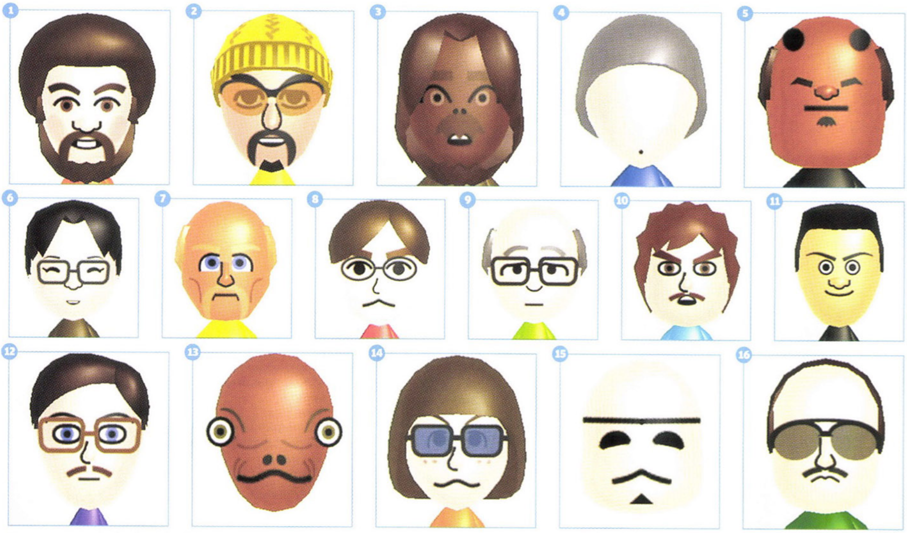
CHANNELS

Mii Spree



Creating Miis is fun, but can it be taken too far? We thought we'd find out.

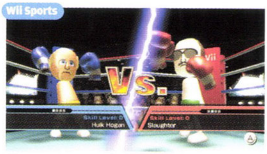
Whether you've owned a Wii since launch or you're a noob, you've probably spent some time exploring the Mii Channel. The built-in tool is fairly robust, allowing you to create recognizable caricatures of yourself, your family, your friends, and anyone else. Making Miis is surprisingly addictive, and it didn't take long for Mii mania to consume NP headquarters. Every staff member has been building his own Mii army, then sharing the best creations with one another via Wi-Fi. What monstrosities have you created on the Mii Channel? Take a photo of your screen, then email it to community@nintendopower.com. —ANDY M.



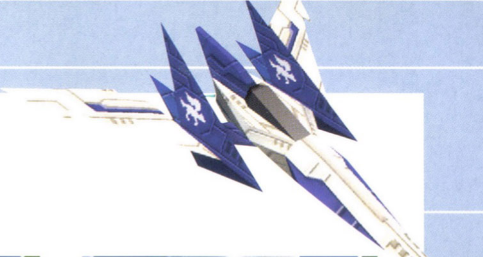
Can you guess who's who? Check page 95 to find out which celebrities/characters we're attempting to Mii-ify in the above portraits.

Take on Mii

Ever wish you could compete against Paul Newman in a game of billiards? How about punch Mike Tyson in the face? With the Mii Channel and a little bit too much time on your hands, you can act out these scenarios and countless others by importing your celebrity carcicatures into games like Wii Sports and Wii Play.



Wii Play
P1 0
31
5 P2



EVENTS

The Fur Flew

After a bloody, two-hour round of Star Fox Command with our readers, it's fair to say that the Nintendo Power team owns the servers—which is beside the point, because we got the crap kicked out of us in the game. A couple of the competitors made us feel like day-trippers to the matrix. Nevertheless, we had a lot of fun and wanted to throw out a big "thank you" to everyone who participated. We'll tip our wings the next time we see you.—Drew W.

87
HALO
Star Fox
Cyclone
Yellow got the Supply Ring!
4th
0
ROB

31
NS_Rodjr
Evan
Cyclone
Pink has been shot down!
4th
0
ROB

Sorry about that, Pink. It's payback for that awful Sunday Night Football song.

1
ablestar
Tenchi25
NS_Rodjr
2nd
1

Only 10 stars? Did you remember to camp at the spawning points?

98
NS_Rodjr
HALO
4th
0

At least one pilot could make his Arwing do amazing things. Seemingly impossible things . . .

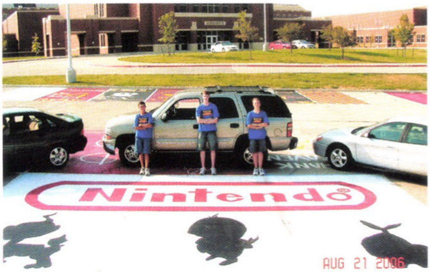
112
HALO
Star Fox
Pink got a Twin Laser!
3rd
0
ROB

Okay, that thing we said about the song was out of line. We like nose studs!

ART

Diamond Parking

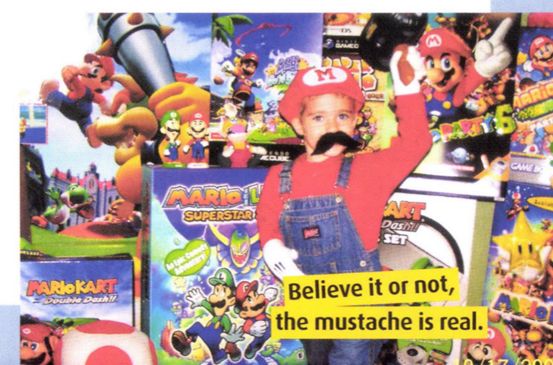
If Nintendo's Pikachu-themed VW Beetle ever travels to Central High School in Keller, Texas, it will have its choice of three custom-painted parking spaces, thanks to Pokémon fans Adam A., Casey W., and Carl D. (pictured from left to right). The seniors painted their spaces to commemorate the unveiling of three Pokémon from the Japanese release of Pokémon Diamond and Pearl. For details on the North American release of the DS titles, see page 27. —George S.


Nintendo
AUG 21 2006

COSPLAY

Mario's Youngest Fan

You've seen Mario in both his infant and adult years, but what did he look like in between? Four-year-old Michael S. from Ohio may be the answer. Michael—shown here in the family game room—is the youngest cosplayer we've seen yet, and though we have no idea what Mario actually looked like when he was four, we're pretty sure he would have been sporting the 'stache. —Andy M.

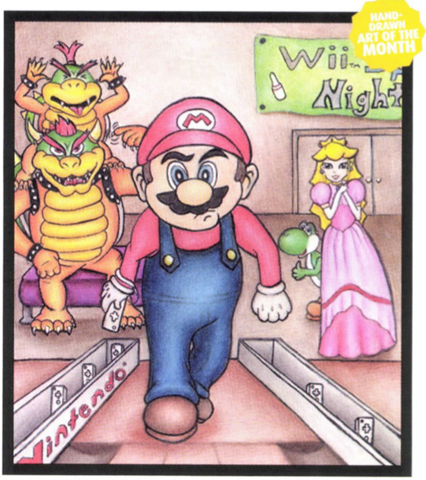


Believe it or not, the mustache is real.

ART OF THE MONTH

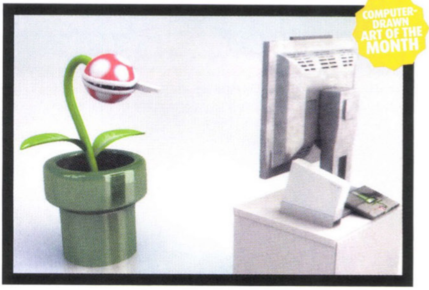
Big N in Control

When we first began the Art of the Month column, most of the good artwork we received was in the hand-drawn category. Not anymore. The computer-drawn works are now as copious and refined as those of the pen-and-ink variety.


HAND-DRAWN ART OF THE MONTH
Wii Night
Nintendo

ARTIST:
KATRINA_1185

SUBJECT:
NINTENDO CHARACTERS AND THE Wii



ARTIST:
LITONICO

SUBJECT:
NINTENDO CHARACTERS AND THE Wii

Looking to submit art for the first time and not sure what to do? Visit **forums.nintendo.com** for details. Be sure to read the rules before you post your masterpieces.

NSider Reviews

We encourage everyone to submit reviews for games, but remember to follow the rules: keep them under 300 words, and check your spelling!

NSider Review of the Month

Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin

reviewed by CIL

2006 marked the 20th anniversary of Konami's Castlevania franchise, and to celebrate they have released yet another beautiful entry to the series on the DS. Portrait of Ruin is everything I had expected it to be and a whole lot more.

The year is 1944, a time of great anguish and pain for the world, and that pain has once more summoned Dracula's Castle to the Earth. Coming to the call is whip-wielding Jonathan Morris and the spell-slinging Charlotte Aulin. Heralding back to the glory days of Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse, I was able to switch seamlessly between the two heroes to exploit their individual abilities, such as the awesome co-op Dual Crush combos and to solve clever puzzles scattered about. It felt fresh and at the same time preserved the flawless controls.

The painting areas are works of art, and are accompanied by musical masterpieces. Whether you're parading through the London-like surroundings of the 13th Street level while listening to the Bloodlines classic "Iron Blue Intension" or creeping slowly through the long-abandoned halls of the gothic Dark Academy, every area presents both a sense of adventure and haunting atmosphere.

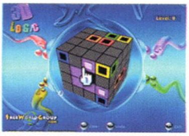
There are tons of things to do even after the game is finished. Side quests and tons of collectables will keep even the most avid completist busy. Fan service permeates the game; those familiar with the series will get caught up in sweet nostalgia. But even gamers new to the series will enjoy what it has to offer.

Let your voice be heard!

If you'd like to submit a review for NP, first become an Nsider at Nintendo.com. Then head to the Reviews forum and submit your game critique. Reviews are selected based on overall writing quality, objectivity, and game knowledge.

GOT THAT SPECIAL SOMETHING THAT BELONGS IN THE COMMUNITY SECTION? DROP US A LINE AT COMMUNITY@NINTENDOPOWER.COM.

WEBSITES www.wiicade.com



The Opera browser has opened up all kinds of new, web-oriented fun. Among the first to latch on to the new cross-pollenation of the Wii remote and the Internet is wiicade.com, home to a big and growing collection of really fun Flash games designed for use with the Wii remote. The site is completely independent, so the games might be a little rough around the edges and not suited for all viewers. Check it out! —Chris S.

TATTOOS

Free Advertising

Nintendo fan Michael S. isn't messin' around. Rather than getting a tattoo of a game character, he showed his allegiance to the big N by inking a variation of the logo itself on his forearm. Now that's hardcore fandom. —Andy M.

WEBSITES

Surfin' the Tube www.youtube.com

In the last year, the video-hosting website YouTube has become an unofficial hub for Nintendo-related material—if you know what to search for, that is. We thought we'd share a couple of our favorite finds. —Andy M.

Nintendo a Cappella

Search "nintendo a cappella" to find a bazillion postings of this hilarious art performance, featuring an a cappella group paying homage to Zelda, Mario, Tetris, Mortal Kombat, and more.

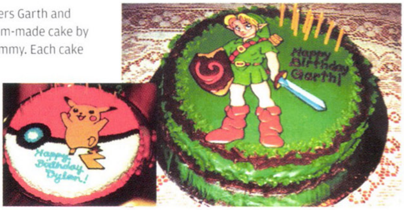
Music performed IN Zelda!

This musical effort is a bit long, but it's worth watching for the end, when two young brothers perform "Spanish Romance" together on the classical guitar and the Zora guitar from Majora's Mask. Search "musical performance in zelda" to find it.

FOOD

Tammy Takes the Cake

For their birthdays, brothers Garth and Dylan each received a custom-made cake by their oh-so-skilled mom, Tammy. Each cake was created by hand using a special type of frosting for the characters. And it's all edible—if you could bring yourself to eat it. —Andy M.



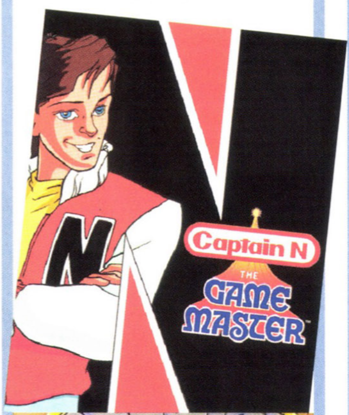
Answers from pg. 92:

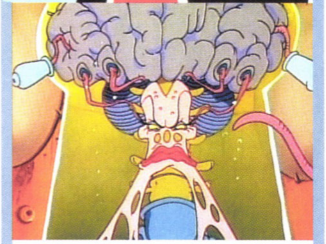
1. Bob Ross, 2. Ali G., 3. Chewbacca (*Star Wars*), 4. Cobra Commander (*G.I. Joe*), 5. Hellboy, 6. Hiro (*Heroes*), 7. Hulk Hogan, 8. Ben Gibbard (Death Cab for Cutie), 9. Mr. Garrison (*South Park*), 10. Nacho (*Nacho Libre*), 11. Reggie Fils-Aime (Nintendo), 12. Kip (*Napoleon Dynamite*), 13. Admiral Ackbar (*Star Wars*), 14. Velma (*Scooby Doo*), 15. Stormtrooper (*Star Wars*), 16. Sgt. Slaughter

DVD

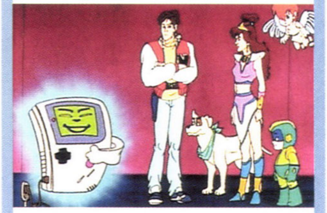
The N is for Nintendo

Armed with a Zapper and an NES Controller-shaped belt buckle, Captain N saved Nintendo fans from Saturday-morning doldrums between 1989 and 1993 in "Captain N: The Game Master" on NBC. On February 27th, 26 episodes from the cartoon's first two seasons reach DVD in a four-disc set. For extras, the set includes concept art and the original "Captain Nintendo" short story from the third issue of Nintendo Power. For a chance to win a copy of the DVD set, visit www.nintendo.com/captainn/. —George S.





The Mother Brain looks like a biology experiment gone wrong and sounds like the plant from *Little Shop of Horrors*.



The second season introduced a walking, talking Game Boy to the Videoland gang.

April 2007 Vol. 214

NEXT MONTH

This year is going to be huge for Nintendo systems. Our next issue brings details on spring and summer's big releases.

LIFE CHANGES

EA is taking its live-your-own-life franchise in a new direction for a Wii and DS Sims spin-off. We'll bring you exclusive info and screens of My Sims.

CARD TRICKS

Video game icons collide in SNK Vs. Capcom Card Fighters DS. We'll have blow-by-blow coverage in a strategy feature.

GAME OVER, MAN!

Creatures from another world take over Wii in Sega's revived arcade title Alien Syndrome. Our preview of the action-RPG will prepare you for battle.

JOIN THE PARTY

Wii control makes Mario Party 8 a landmark game in the popular series. Our coverage continues with a focus on multiplayer features.

CONTACTS

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ESRB GAME RATING INFORMATION
To contact the ESRB or for more information, visit www.esrb.org.
The Entertainment Software Rating Board evaluates each game's content and assigns one of the following ratings to reflect the appropriate age group for the game.

EARLY CHILDHOOD eC CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Early Childhood

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Everyone

EVERYONE 10+ E 10+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Everyone (10+)

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Teen (13+)

MATURE 17+ M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mature (17+)

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‡ For information about your current Wii Console warranty, please refer to the Wii Operations Manual.

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Blue Rescue Team DS Version

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T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Blood
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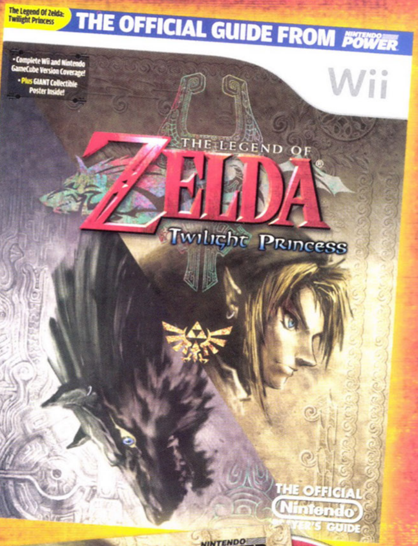
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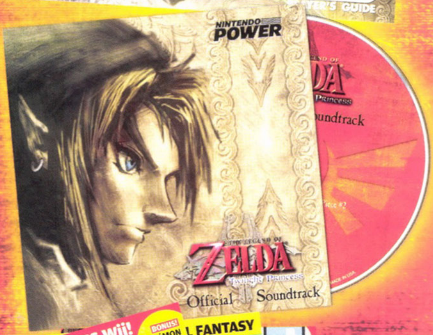
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Twilight Princess
Official Soundtrack

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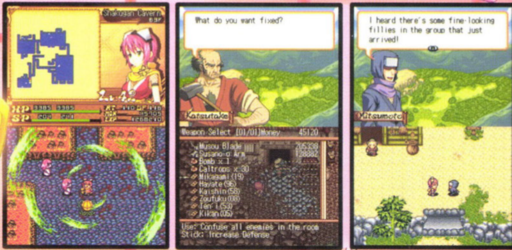
Finally, a dungeon RPG strong enough for a man...

LEGEND OF THE UNEMPLOYED NINJ

無職忍者伝

IZUNA

...but played as a hot CHICK!



Shakosan Cavern

What do you want fixed?

Katsutake

Weapon Select [01/01]Money 45120

Musou Blade 205338
Susano-o Arm 128882
Bomb x 1
Caltrops x 30
Mikagami(19)
Hayate(96)
Kaishin(58)
Zoufuku(08)
Ten-i(53)
Kikan(05)

Use: Confuse all enemies in the room
Stick: Increase Defense

I heard there's some fine-looking fillies in the group that just arrived!

Mitsumoto

You have the privilege of controlling the cutest ninja ever, Izuna (that's me!), through all these different dungeons. Customize my weapons and unleash devastating ninja spells to destroy monsters and score major treasure. Let's face it, I need the cash!

The Izuna online comic is coming to atlus.com

EVERYONE 10+
E 10+
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
Mild Suggestive Themes

NINTENDO DS™

ATLUS
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SMASH 2007

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1/1 New Year's Day • 1/15 Martin Luther King Jr Day

FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

2/14 Valentine's Day

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

3/11 Daylight Savings Time Begins

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

5/13 Mother's Day • 5/28 Memorial Day

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

6/17 Father's Day

JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

7/1 Canada Day • 7/4 Independence Day

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27	28	29

9/3 Labor Day

OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

NOVEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

11/4 Daylight Savings Time Ends

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

12/31 New Year's Eve

SUPER SMASH BROS. BRAWL

NINTENDO POWER

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org for updated rating information.

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